

INSIDE: Huskers' 50th bowl game has them facing Georgia again in the Gator Bowl

THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

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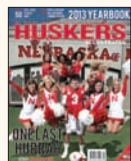
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**The next Huskers Illustrated Edition, featuring the Gator Bowl Recap,
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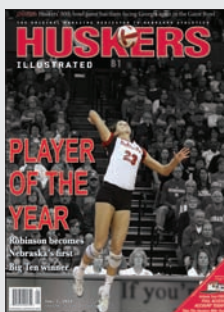
BY **CHRIS PETERS**

Randy Gregory took a little while to get going this season sack wise, but once he did, the sacks came quickly and he led the Big Ten with 9.5.

2013 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME	TV/SCORE
AUG. 31	WYOMING	MEMORIAL STADIUM	7P.M.	W, 37-34
SEPT. 7	SOUTHERN MISS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	5P.M.	W, 56-13
SEPT. 14	UCLA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	11A.M.	L, 41-21
SEPT. 21	SOUTH DAKOTA STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30P.M.	W, 59-20
OCT. 5	ILLINOIS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	11A.M.	W, 39-19
OCT. 12	@PURDUE	WEST LAFAYETTE, IND.	11A.M.	W, 44-7
OCT. 26	@MINNESOTA	MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.	11A.M.	L, 34-23
NOV. 2	NORTHWESTERN	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30P.M.	W, 27-24
NOV. 9	@MICHIGAN	ANN ARBOR, MICH.	2:30P.M.	W, 17-13
NOV. 16	MICHIGAN STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30P.M.	L, 41-28
NOV. 23	@PENN STATE	UNIVERSITY PARK, PA	2:30P.M.	W, 23-20OT
NOV. 29	IOWA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	11A.M.	L, 38-17
JAN. 1	@GATOR BOWL VS. GEORGIA JACKSONVILLE, FLA.		11A.M.	ESPN2

ALL GAMES ARE CST



ON THE COVER

Senior outside hitter Kelsey Robinson was named Big Ten Volleyball Player of the Year following her remarkable season. The transfer from Tennessee helped the young Huskers advance all the way to the Elite Eight again this season before falling to defending national champion Texas on Dec. 14 before a packed house at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

PHOTO BY MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

From the Editor BY DARREN IVY twitter.com/DarrenIvy1

HUSKERS FACE SAME BOWL OPPONENT IN BACK-TO-BACK TRIPS FOR THIRD TIME EVER

WHEN IT WAS ANNOUNCED ON DEC. 8 THAT NEBRASKA WOULD BE HEADED BACK TO FLORIDA TO PLAY THE SAME BOWL OPPONENT AS LAST YEAR IN THE GATOR BOWL, THERE WERE MANY DISAPPOINTED HUSKER FANS.

A large number of Nebraska fans were hoping for a rematch with a member of NU's former Big 12 Conference in the Bufalo Wild Wings bowl in Tempe, Ariz.

However, it wasn't in the cards for Nebraska (8-4) this year as that bowl selected Michigan to face Bill Snyder's Kansas State squad and left the Huskers to battle Georgia (8-4).

It will be the third time in school history the Huskers have faced the same opponent in back-to-back bowl games. NU also faced Alabama in the 1966 Orange Bowl and 1967 Sugar Bowl and Florida State in the 1993 and 1994 Orange Bowls.

While NU's fan base, which has not been purchasing many tickets for the New Year's rematch in Jacksonville, Fla., may be disappointed with the same opponent, head football coach Bo Pelini is embracing the Huskers' third-straight January bowl game against a SEC opponent.

"The Gator Bowl gives our football team the opportunity to play in a New Year's Day bowl for a third-straight season, and we look forward to the trip to Jacksonville," Pelini said. "We had a great experience at the Gator Bowl when we played there in my first year here. We have some familiarity with Georgia having played them last year in the bowl game, but these are two different football teams. This will be a great challenge for our football team, and we look forward to the opportunity."

It will be the third time Nebraska has met Georgia in a bowl game and NU's second ever trip to the Gator Bowl, where Pelini's 2008 team defeated Clemson 26-21 on Jan. 1, 2009.

The significance of this year's bowl game for the Nebraska program is that it is the 50th all-time bowl appearance by the



Huskers. USC (50), Texas (52) and Alabama (61) are the only other programs that have played in 50 or more bowl games.

It will be the 27th time that Nebraska has played on New Year's Day. NU is 10-16 all-time in Jan. 1 games.

While many might be sick of SEC opponents, the current three-game streak is still several short of the seven-straight bowl games Nebraska played against SEC opponents in the 1960s and 1970s.

Nebraska is 12-7 all-time against SEC opponents, but 0-4 in its last four encounters.

The last win Nebraska had over a SEC opponent came against Tennessee 31-21 back in 2000 at the Fiesta Bowl. It capped off a 12-1 season and Nebraska's dominant run through the late 1990s.

A win in this year's bowl game won't help NU finish the season ranked No. 2/3 like in did in 2000, but it could do wonders to cap off this tumultuous season, bring the Huskers fan base together and build some momentum for 2014.

Nebraska has been building some momentum since athletic director Shawn Eichorst gave head coach Bo Pelini a public display of support following the Huskers' 38-17 loss to Iowa in the regular-season finale. The Husker staff has won some major recruiting battles for some top players who were considering other Big Ten schools and major programs.

Defeating Georgia, who has had a similar injury-plagued season as Nebraska, would give the Huskers at least nine wins for the sixth-straight season under Pelini and

It also could perhaps propel the Huskers into next season as the rematch win over Florida State did in 1994.

N

NEBRASKA'S ALL-TIME BOWL RESULTS

Jan. 1, 1941	Stanford 21, Nebraska 13	1941 Rose
Jan. 1, 1955	Duke 34, Nebraska 7	1955 Orange
Dec. 15, 1962	Nebraska 36, Miami 34	1962 Gotham
Jan. 1, 1964	Nebraska 13, Auburn 7	1964 Orange
Jan. 1, 1965	Arkansas 10, Nebraska 7	1965 Cotton
Jan. 1, 1966	Alabama 39, Nebraska 28	1966 Orange
Jan. 2, 1967	Alabama 34, Nebraska 7	1967 Sugar
Dec. 20, 1969	Nebraska 45, Georgia 6	1969 Sun
Jan. 1, 1971	Nebraska 17, LSU 12	1971 Orange
Jan. 1, 1972	Nebraska 38, Alabama 6	1972 Orange
Jan. 1, 1973	Nebraska 40, Notre Dame 6	1973 Orange
Jan. 1, 1974	Nebraska 19, Texas 3	1974 Cotton
Dec. 31, 1974	Nebraska 13, Florida 10	1974 Sugar
Dec. 26, 1975	Arizona State 17, Nebraska 14	1975 Fiesta
Dec. 31, 1976	Nebraska 27, Texas Tech 24	1976 Bluebonnet
Dec. 19, 1977	Nebraska 21, North Carolina 17	1977 Liberty
Jan. 1, 1979	Oklahoma 31, Nebraska 24	1979 Orange
Jan. 1, 1980	Houston 17, Nebraska 14	1980 Cotton
Dec. 27, 1980	Nebraska 31, Mississippi State 17	1980 Sun
Jan. 1, 1982	Clemson 22, Nebraska 15	1982 Orange
Jan. 1, 1983	Nebraska 21, LSU 20	1983 Orange
Jan. 2, 1984	Miami (FL) 31, Nebraska 30	1984 Orange
Jan. 1, 1985	Nebraska 28, LSU 10	1985 Sugar
Jan. 1, 1986	Michigan 27, Nebraska 23	1986 Fiesta
Jan. 1, 1987	Nebraska 30, LSU 15	1987 Sugar
Jan. 1, 1988	Florida State 31, Nebraska 28	1988 Fiesta
Jan. 2, 1989	Miami (FL) 23, Nebraska 3	1989 Orange
Jan. 1, 1990	Florida State 41, Nebraska 17	1990 Fiesta
Jan. 1, 1991	Georgia Tech 45, Nebraska 21	1991 Citrus
Jan. 1, 1992	Miami (FL) 22, Nebraska 0	1992 Orange
Jan. 1, 1993	Florida State 27, Nebraska 14	1993 Orange
Jan. 1, 1994	Florida State 18, Nebraska 16	1994 Orange
Jan. 1, 1995	Nebraska 24, Miami 17	1995 Orange
Jan. 2, 1996	Nebraska 62, Florida 24	1996 Fiesta
Dec. 31, 1996	Nebraska 41, Virginia Tech 21	1997 Orange
Jan. 2, 1998	Nebraska 42, Tennessee 17	1998 Orange
Dec. 30, 1998	Arizona 23, Nebraska 20	1998 Holiday
Jan. 2, 2000	Nebraska 31, Tennessee 21	2000 Fiesta
Dec. 30, 2000	Nebraska 66, Northwestern 17	2000 Alamo
Jan. 3, 2002	Miami (FL) 37, Nebraska 14	2002 Rose Bowl
Dec. 27, 2002	Mississippi 27, Nebraska 23	2002 Independence
Dec. 29, 2003	Nebraska 17, Michigan State 3	2003 Alamo
Dec. 28, 2005	Nebraska 32, Michigan 28	2005 Alamo
Jan. 1, 2007	Auburn 17, Nebraska 14	2007 Cotton
Jan. 1, 2009	Nebraska 26, Clemson 21	2009 Gator
Dec. 30, 2009	Nebraska 33, Arizona 0	2009 Holiday
Dec. 30, 2010	Washington 19, Nebraska 7	2010 Holiday
Jan. 2, 2012	South Carolina 30, Nebraska 13	2012 Capital One
Jan. 1, 2013	Georgia 45, Nebraska 31	2013 Capital One

Bowling with Big Red

50 years of Postseason Play for Huskers



Source: NU Media Relations

Scouting Report



Georgia Bulldogs

Injuries, bad luck derail what many thought would be a banner season | DOUG GRIFFITHS

Georgia entered the 2013 season ranked fifth in the country and remained in the national championship picture even though it suffered a 38-35 season-opening loss at No. 8 Clemson.

The Bulldogs responded by rattling off four-straight wins and were 4-1 when Missouri paid Athens, Ga. a visit.

The Tigers shocked the injury-riddled Bulldogs, mainly thanks to a 21-point second quarter.

A week later another stunning loss followed, this time at Vanderbilt and gone was even the thought of a BCS bowl appearance for Georgia.

Two wins followed and then the Bulldogs

appeared to have Auburn beaten until an unbelievable deflected pass resulted in a 73-yard touchdown strike on fourth-and-18 with 25 seconds left in the game.

The loss at Auburn dropped Georgia to 6-4 overall, 4-3 in the SEC.

The Bulldogs rebounded to close out their season with a pair of wins, but had to know they're a better team than perhaps their 8-4 record would indicate.

INJURIES SLOW BULLDOGS

Please forgive Georgia fans if they continually ask themselves, "What might have been?" when reflecting on the 2013 season. It has been a season filled with injuries to key



Sophomore running back Todd Gurley avoids P.J. Smith during the 2013 Capital One Bowl.



THE VITALS

WHAT: Georgia vs. Nebraska

WHEN/WHERE: 11 a.m. CT, Jan. 1 in Jacksonville, Fla. (Everbank Stadium capacity 57,164)

TV: ESPN2

Radio: The Husker Sports Network broadcasts the action to 30 of the 34 statewide radio markets. KFAB (1110 AM) serves as the Omaha affiliate and KLIN (1400 AM) serves as the Lincoln affiliate, while KRVN (880 AM) is a third affiliate that reaches around the state.

Join Greg Sharpe (play-by-play), Matt Davison (color), Lane Grindle (sideline/post-game) and Jeff Culhane (Big Red Reaction Show) for all the action.

The game can also be heard live on Huskers.com and SIRIUS Satellite Radio.

COACHES: Nebraska: Bo Pelini (57-24 overall, 34-14 in Big Ten, six seasons). Georgia: Mark Richt (126-44 overall, 74-35 in the SEC, 13 seasons).

SERIES: The series is tied 1-1.

GEORGIA FAST FACTS

Location: Athens, Ga.

Enrollment: 34,816

Lettermen Returning/Lost: 49/24

Starters Returning/Lost: 16/8 (counting specialists)

Offensive Formation: Pro Style

Defensive Formation: 3-4

DID YOU KNOW?

The Bulldogs will be making their 49th bowl appearance Jan. 1, a number that ranks as the fifth-most postseason games in college football history behind Alabama (61), Texas (52), USC (50) and Nebraska (50).

2013 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Result
8/31	@ Clemson	L, 35-38
9/7	South Carolina	W, 41-30
9/21	North Texas	W, 45-21
9/28	LSU	W, 44-41
10/5	@ Tennessee	W, 34-31 (OT)
10/12	Missouri	L, 26-41
10/19	@ Vanderbilt	L, 27-31
11/2	Florida	W, 23-20
11/9	Appalachian State	W, 45-6
11/16	@ Auburn	L, 38-43
11/23	Kentucky	W, 59-17
11/30	@ Georgia Tech	W, 41-34 (2OT)
1/1	vs. Nebraska*	

*TaxSlayer.com Gator Bowl (Jacksonville, Fla.)

Scouting Report



personnel. The injury bug has bitten the Dawgs very hard this season.

It all started in Georgia's overtime win at Tennessee. Running back Keith Marshall and receiver Justin Scott-Wesley both tore the ACL in their right knees.

Then Todd Gurley rolled his left ankle against the Vols and missed the following week's game against Missouri. Finally, star quarterback Aaron Murray tore his ACL against Kentucky on Nov. 23.

MURRAY OUT FOR REST OF YEAR

As noted above, Murray, who holds SEC career records for completions (921), passing yards (13,166), touchdown passes (121) and total offense (13,562 yards), will be a spectator against the Huskers.

Murray hopes to rehab his surgically repaired knee to the point where he'll be ready to participate in Georgia's pro day before the NFL draft, which would mean he'd be five months removed from surgery.

STATISTICALLY SPEAKING

Entering the Gator Bowl, Georgia averages 38.2 points per game (fifth in the 14-team SEC) and is on the verge of setting the school record in that department. Last year the Bulldogs averaged a school-record 37.8 points. Defensively, Georgia allows 29.4 points per game (11th). Georgia is minus-six in turnover margin (13th).

AS GOOD AS IT GETS

Georgia has one of college football's best placekickers in sophomore Marshall Morgan, a Lou Groza Award semifinalist. Morgan, a first-team All-SEC pick, leads all SEC kickers in field goals made, hitting 18-of-20 and points per game (10.0). Earlier this year, he hit a 56-yarder against Tennessee.

LAST TIME OUT

Georgia 41, Georgia Tech 34 (2OT)
Nov. 30, 2013 at Atlanta, Ga.

Georgia rallied from a 20-point deficit to beat rival Georgia Tech in double overtime to win for the fourth time in its last five games.

UGA running back Todd Gurley was the star of the game, running for 122 yards and three touchdowns, two of which came in regulation. It was Gurley's 25-yard touchdown in the second overtime that gave the Bulldogs' their first lead of the game and proved to be the game-winner.

Georgia Tech's Vad Lee threw for a career-high 232 yards.

The game ended when Lee's fourth-down pass was deflected.

Georgia quarterback Hutson Mason started for the first time and completed 22-of-36 passes for 299 yards with two touchdowns and an interception.

REMEMBER WHEN?

No. 6 Georgia 45, No. 23 Nebraska 31
Jan. 1, 2013 at Capital One Bowl, Orlando, Fla.

Georgia quarterback Aaron Murray had a Citrus Bowl to remember.

The junior threw five touchdown passes, setting a Georgia bowl record, including a pair of fourth-quarter scoring strikes

Facing the nation's top-ranked passing defense, Murray threw for 427 yards, also a Georgia bowl record.

Murray earned bowl MVP honors as he helped Georgia notch its 12th win of the season for the third time in school history.

Murray did throw a pair of first-half interceptions, including one that was returned for a touchdown.

But it was a pair of second-half turnovers that hurt Nebraska's cause. Taylor Martinez, who was sacked five times, had two interceptions and two touchdown passes, while Rex Burkhead closed out his Nebraska career with 140 yards rushing. In addition to the turnovers, the Huskers were hurt by not being able to get off the field on third downs. Georgia converted 12-of-17 third downs. Nebraska finished with 443 total yards of offense. Georgia had 589 yards of which running back Todd Gurley ran for 125 yards.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Georgia is a 10-point favorite over Nebraska in the Gator Bowl.
- The Bulldogs are 52-9 under Coach Mark Richt when facing teams from outside the SEC. That's an 85.2 winning percentage.
- Georgia ranks second in the SEC in sacks, recording 32 this season.
- The Bulldogs are 27-18-3 all-time in bowl games.
- With 97 more rushing yards, Todd Gurley will become only the third tailback in Georgia history to have back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons. He hopes to join Herschel Walker and Knowshon Moreno.



Mark Richt

Resume: Is one of only five men in NCAA Division I-A history to record 115 or more wins in his first

12 seasons as a head coach. Richt has led the Bulldogs to five SEC Championship Game appearances and a pair of SEC titles. Under his leadership, Georgia is playing in its 13th straight bowl game. In February of 2013, Richt received a one-year contract extension and pay raise. He now makes \$3.2 million per season and is under contract through 2017.

KNOW YOUR FOE

Todd Gurley, RB, 6-1, 232, So.



Earned second-team All-SEC honors after rushing for 903 yards in nine games this season. He is tied for second in the conference in scoring.

Gurley rushed for 100 yards or more four times this season.

Ramik Wilson, LB, 6-2, 232, Jr.



Was named first-team All-SEC after leading the conference with 128 total stops, including an SEC-best 72 solos. He has led Georgia in tackles in nine

games this season, including an 18-effort affair against Auburn. Wilson also has 11.0 tackles for loss in 2013.

Hutson Mason, QB, 6-3, 202, Jr.



Up until this season, Mason had only appeared in eight games during his career and attempted a total of 47 passes. Now he finds himself as Georgia's

starting quarterback after Aaron Murray suffered a season-ending injury.

2012 RESULTS (12-2 overall, 7-1 in SEC)

Date	Opponent	Result
Sept. 1	Buffalo	W, 45-23
Sept. 8	@ Missouri	W, 41-20
Sept. 15	Florida Atlantic	W, 56-20
Sept. 22	Vanderbilt	W, 48-3
Sept. 29	Tennessee	W, 51-44
Oct. 6	@ South Carolina	L, 7-35
Oct. 20	@ Kentucky	W, 29-24
Oct. 27	Florida	W, 17-9
Nov. 3	Mississippi	W, 37-10
Nov. 10	@ Auburn	W, 38-0
Nov. 17	Georgia Southern	W, 45-14
Nov. 24	Georgia Tech	W, 42-10
Dec. 1	vs. Alabama^	L, 28-32
Jan. 1	vs. Nebraska*	W, 45-31

^SEC Championship Game (Atlanta, Ga.)
*Capital One Bowl (Orlando, Fla.)

Bowl Game Schedule (All times E.S.T.)

Gilden New Mexico

Saturday, Dec. 21, 2 p.m. ESPN



Washington State

Pac 12 (6-6)



Colorado State

Mountain West (7-6)

R+L Carriers New Orleans

Saturday, Dec. 21, 9 p.m. ESPN



Tulane

Conference USA (7-5)



Louisiana-Lafayette

Sunbelt (8-3)

Little Caesars Pizza

Thursday, Dec. 26, 6 p.m. ESPN



Pittsburgh

ACC (6-6)



Bowling Green

Mid-American (10-3)

Texas Bowl

Friday, Dec. 27, 6 p.m. ESPN



Syracuse

ACC (6-6)



Minnesota

Big Ten (8-4)

Belk Bowl

Saturday, Dec. 28, 3:20 p.m. ESPN



Cincinnati

American (9-3)



North Carolina

ACC (6-6)

Bell Helicopter Armed Forces

Monday, Dec. 30, 11:45 a.m. ESPN



Middle Tennessee

Conference USA (8-4)



Navy

Independent (7-4)

National University Holiday

Monday, Dec. 30, 10:15 a.m. ESPN



Arizona State

Pac 12 (10-3)



Texas Tech

Big 12 (7-5)

Royal Purple Las Vegas

Saturday, Dec. 21, 3:30 p.m. ABC



Fresno State

Mountain West (11-1)



USC

Pac 12 (9-4)

Beef O'Brady's

Monday Dec. 23, 2 p.m. ESPN



East Carolina

Conference USA (9-3)



Ohio

Mid-American (7-5)

S.D. County Credit Union

Thursday Dec. 26, 9:30 p.m. ESPN



Utah State

Mountain West (8-5)



Northern Illinois

Mid-American (12-1)

Fight Hunger

Friday Dec. 27, 9:30 p.m. ESPN



BYU

Independent (8-4)



Washington

Pac 12 (8-4)

Russell Athletic

Saturday, Dec. 28, 6:45 p.m. ESPN



Miami

ACC (9-3)



Louisville

American (11-1)

F.A. Mortgage Music City

Monday, Dec. 30, 3:15 p.m. ESPN



Ole Miss

SEC (7-5)



Georgia Tech

ACC (7-5)

AdvoCare V100

Tuesday, Dec. 31, 12:30 p.m. ESPN



Arizona

Pac 12 (7-5)



Boston College

ACC (7-5)

Famous Idaho Potato

Saturday, Dec. 21, 5:30 p.m. ESPN



Buffalo

Mid-American (8-4)



San Diego State

Mountain West (7-5)

Sheraton Hawaii

Dec. 24, 8 p.m. ESPN



Boise State

Mountain West (8-4)



Oregon State

Pac 12 (6-6)

Military Bowl

Friday, Dec. 27, 2:30 p.m. ESPN



Marshall

Conference USA (9-4)



Maryland

ACC (7-5)

New Era Pinstripe

Saturday, Dec. 28, Noon ESPN



Rutgers

American (6-6)



Notre Dame

Independent (8-4)

Buffalo Wild Wings

Saturday, Dec. 28, 10:15 p.m. ESPN



Michigan

Big Ten (7-5)



Kansas State

Big 12 (7-5)

Valero Alamo

Monday, Dec. 30, 6:45 p.m. ESPN



Oregon

Pac 12 (10-2)



Texas

Big 12 (8-4)

Hyundai Sun

Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2 p.m. CBS



Virginia Tech

ACC (8-4)



UCLA

Pac 12 (9-3)

Bowl Game Schedule (All times E.S.T.)

AutoZone Liberty

Tuesday, Dec. 31, 4 p.m. ESPN



Rice

Conference USA (10-3)



Mississippi State

SEC (6-6)

Capital One

Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1 p.m. ABC



Wisconsin

Big Ten (9-3)



South Carolina

SEC (10-2)

Tostitos Fiesta

Wednesday, Jan. 1, 8:30 p.m. ESPN



UCF

American (11-1)



Baylor

Big 12 (11-1)

AT&T Cotton

Friday, Jan. 3, 7:30 p.m. Fox



Oklahoma State

Big 12 (11-2)



Missouri

SEC (10-2)

BBVA Compass

Saturday, Jan. 4, 1 p.m. ESPN



Vanderbilt

SEC (8-4)



Houston

American (8-4)

GoDaddy

Sunday, Jan. 5, 9 p.m. ESPN



Arkansas State

Sun Belt (7-5)



Ball State

Mid-American (10-2)

VIZIO BCS Championship

Monday, Jan. 6, 8:30 p.m. ESPN



Florida State

ACC (13-0)



Auburn

SEC (12-1)

Chick-fil-A

Tuesday, Dec. 31, 8 p.m. ESPN



Duke

ACC (10-3)



Texas A&M

SEC (8-4)

Outback

Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1 p.m. ESPN



Iowa

Big Ten (8-4)



LSU

SEC (9-3)

All-State Sugar

Thursday, Jan. 2, 8:30 p.m. ESPN



Oklahoma

Big 12 (10-2)



Alabama

SEC (11-1)

Heart of Dallas

Wednesday, Jan. 1, Noon ESPNU



UNLV

Mountain West (7-5)



North Texas

Conference USA (8-4)

Rose Bowl by Vizio

Wednesday, Jan. 1, 5 p.m. ESPN



Michigan State

Big Ten (12-1)



Stanford

Pac 12 (11-2)

Discover Orange

Friday, Jan. 3, TBD ESPN



Clemson

ACC (10-2)



Ohio State

Big Ten (12-1)



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Game 1

Nebraska 37, Wyoming 34

Aug. 31, 2013 in Lincoln



Imani Cross scores one of his two touchdowns against the Cowboys.

JIM RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Nebraska kicked off the 2013 season brimming with confidence. Talks of Scoring Explosion-esque offense, excitement from an expanded East Stadium and the countless what-ifs generated by an easy schedule set hopes high.

What could have been a tone-setting season-opener for Nebraska turned into an embarrassment quickly. Wyoming quarterback Brett Smith made the Blackshirts like foolish, completing 29-or-43 passes for 383 yards, scrambling for 92 yards on the ground.

The Cowboys gained 602 yards – the eighth most in Nebraska history.

“That, to me, was a really bad dream,” defensive coordinator John Papuchis said. “It was close to being a nightmare.”

Still, the Huskers found themselves with a 17-point lead in the fourth quarter thanks to running backs Ameer Abdullah and Imani Cross, who both topped 100 yards. Cross scored two of Nebraska’s touchdowns.

With six minutes remaining and the Huskers staring at a 4th and 1, coach Bo Pelini opted to go for it. Quarterback Taylor Martinez fumbled the snap, recovered by Wyoming, who would convert the turnover into a touchdown shortly thereafter.

A late touchdown brought Wyoming to within 3 points. The Cowboys elected for an onside kick, but failed.

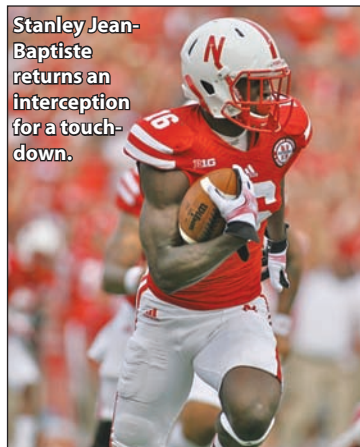
A Husker three-and-out and a terrific punt by new punter Sam Foltz gave Smith 1:07 to take his team 94 yards to tie the game. Fortunately for Nebraska, he didn’t do it.

Quincy Enunwa only had three catches, but two of them were touchdowns.

Game 2

Nebraska 56, So. Miss 13

Sept. 7, 2013 in Lincoln



Stanley Jean-Baptiste returns an interception for a touchdown.

JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

The Huskers bounced back from a lackluster season opener and generated the kind of excitement fans were hoping to see.

Cornerback Stanley Jean-Baptiste returned an interception for a touchdown on the third play of the game, the quickest defensive score since 1996 for Nebraska. Later in the game, fellow-DB Ciente Evans returned an interception of his own for 6 points. In total, the Huskers picked off the Golden Eagles four times, including two by Evans and one other one by Corey Cooper.

Midway through the fourth quarter, the Blackshirts had held the Golden Eagles to only four rushing yards, subbing in reserve players. Future starters Sam Burtch and Tommy Armstrong Jr. saw the field, earning their first touchdowns.

“Going in, that was my main objective, to score on my first drive at make the coaches happy,” Armstrong said. “My first experiences of being hit, it was awesome.”

Seven different players would score touchdowns for Nebraska, with the Huskers totaling 479 yards on 74 plays.

Although Southern Miss would finish the season with only one win, the 56-13 romp provided necessary confidence for a Husker team headed toward a top-25 showdown with UCLA the following week.

Imani Cross and Quincy Enunwa continued their scoring ways with a 1-yard rushing touchdown and a 16-yard receiving touchdown, respectively.

Ameer Abdullah also rattled off a 37-

Game 3

UCLA 41, Nebraska 21

Sept. 14, 2013 in Lincoln



Jamal Turner congratulates Quincy Enunwa after his touchdown catch.

JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Donning slick alternate uniforms, Nebraska got out to a quick start in a rematch with UCLA, hoping to avenge a loss the year prior. A 21-3 lead had Husker Nation salivating at the thought that a win over the Bruins could set the stage for an easy run through the Big Ten Conference.

When the Huskers scored their first touchdown, fans released blue and gold balloons, holding up signs consoling the Bruins, who had lost teammate Nick Pasquale, a walk-on receiver who was hit by a car the week prior.

But it was the Huskers who would need consoling after the game.

A UCLA touchdown allowed one minute before halftime sparked a 38-point run.

After halftime, the Bruins would score five more times. The Huskers wouldn’t score again.

“I get the feeling, at times, that our guys, instead of playing to win, are playing not to lose,” coach Bo Pelini said. “That’s the wrong way to go about it.”

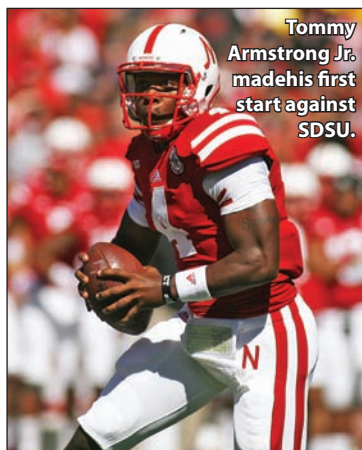
Nebraska gained only 130 yards in the second half. Quarterback Taylor Martinez finished minus-13 rushing, while Ameer Abdullah fell short of his almost-automatic 100 yards.

A stadium-record 91,471 fans watch from Memorial Stadium, while thousands more watch on national TV as the Huskers melted down, losing by 20 in a game with heartache reminiscent to the Big Ten Championship Game loss to Wisconsin.

For the first time in the 2013 season, a decent chunk of Nebraska fans began to debate coach Bo Pelini’s future as head coach.

2013 SEASON RECAP

Game 4 Nebraska 59, SDSU 20 Sept. 21, 2013 in Lincoln



Quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr., a redshirt freshman, starts his first game at Nebraska in the place of the injured Taylor Martinez, sharing reps with senior Ron Kellogg III.

The two quarterbacks lead the Huskers, helping rack up 300 yards rushing and 300 yards passing for the first time in school history.

New names emerge for the Huskers, as defensive end Randy Gregory, a junior college transfer, returns an intercepted pass for a touchdown.

Receivers Tyler Wullenwaber and Sam Burtch catch touchdown passes and true freshman running back Terrell Newby punches in a 10-yard touchdown run and a 5-yard touchdown run.

Senior Quincy Enunwa had six catches for a team-high 78 yards, but saw his three-game streak of catching a touchdown pass end.

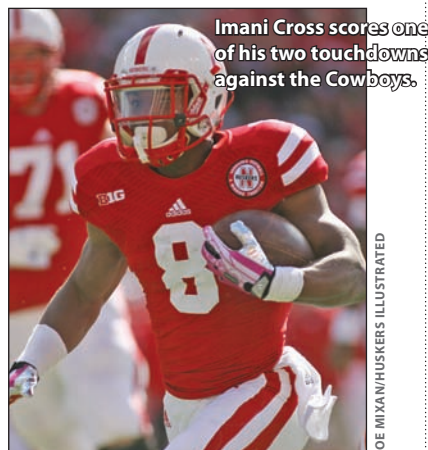
There isn't much optimism for the Husker defense early, as the Blackshirts allowed Jackrabbits running back Zach Zenner to rush for 202 yards on 21 carries in three quarters of action.

"I just feel like sometimes, we're sitting back and taking it," coach Bo Pelini said. "There has to be a sense of urgency."

Ten different players register a carry for the Huskers, while 11 players catch a pass.

The Huskers exhaust nearly all of their reserves, inserting as many players into the game as possible once a victory is in hand, wrapping up non-conference play with a 3-1 record.

Game 5 Nebraska 39, Illinois 19 Oct. 5, 2013 in Lincoln



Nebraska's defense found a way to rebound during a gusty homecoming Saturday at Memorial Stadium. The Blackshirts allowed 24 first downs to Illinois, but held the Illinois offense – who entered the game 12th nationally in third down conversion percentage – to just 4 of 15 on third down.

"I saw some good things (defensively)," coach Bo Pelini said. "I saw definite progress, but nowhere near where we need to be."

With wind whipping about the stadium, the Huskers stuck to their basic ground game, feeding running back Ameer Abdullah the football.

He made the most of his 20 carries, rushing for 225 yards, the 16th most yards in Nebraska history.

Abdullah rattled off eight runs of 10 yards or more, highlighted by a 43-yard touchdown run in the third quarter. The junior also had a two-yard touchdown run to get Nebraska on the board first.

The highlight of the game, however, came on a pass to Kenny Bell from freshman Tommy Armstrong Jr. Armstrong threw a ball into tight coverage. A gust of wind send the ball high, where Bell reached out an outstretched branch and hauled in the pass. Defenders, who didn't seem to anticipate a catch, froze, allowing Bell to dance into the end zone untouched, boosting the Huskers to a conference-opening win.

Quincy Enunwa got back on his touchdown streak after being kept out of endzone against South Dakota State. He finished with four catches for a career-high 80 yards. He surpasses the 1,000-yard mark for career receiving yards with his 26-yard touchdown.

Game 6 Nebraska 44, Purdue 7 Oct. 12, 2013 in West Lafayette, Ind.



The Blackshirts make a big statement, nearly shutting out the Boilermakers on the road. Defensive end Randy Gregory, an Indiana native, makes his presence known, recording his first career solo sack, bringing down first-time starting quarterback Danny Etling in the end zone for a safety to give the Huskers a 30-0 lead.

"I thought he threw the ball," Gregory said. "I thought it was an incomplete pass, then everyone was saying 'Safety! Safety!' It was great to have that."

The Huskers outgain the Boilermakers 435-216, holding Purdue to only 11 first downs all game.

Imani Cross led Nebraska with two rushing touchdowns. Tommy Armstrong Jr., King Frazier and Ameer Abdullah also scored rushing touchdowns.

Quincy Enunwa continued to be a scoring machine for the Huskers, catching an eight-yard touchdown pass.

The Blackshirts sack Etling five times for minus-50 yards.

Leroy Alexander made an interception for the Huskers.

In the middle of the second quarter, playmaking cornerback Stanley Jean-Baptiste lays a hit on a Purdue receiver near the line of scrimmage. Referees flag him for targeting, ejecting him from the game.

The Huskers held up fine without him, however. Purdue would score its only touchdown of the game with 39 seconds remaining in the game, striking on a 55-yard pass against Nebraska's second-string defense.

2013 SEASON RECAP

Game 7

Minnesota 34, Nebraska 23

Oct. 26, 2013 in Minneapolis, Minn.



Taylor Martinez returned for the game, but couldn't lead another comeback.

JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Nebraska gets manhandled in the trenches on both sides of the football, giving up 271 yards on the ground and earning only 189.

Quarterback Taylor Martinez returns for one game before being sidelined for the remainder of the season, completing 16-of-30 passes, throwing for 139 yards and rushing for 16.

Many of Martinez's passes are dropped by receivers.

Ameer Abdullah picks up 165 rushing yards on 19 carries, but NU's next best rusher only had 16 yards.

Defenders make feeble attempts at arm tackles, while Minnesota's rushers break free as David Cobb rushes for a career-best 138 yards on 33 carries. Quarterback Phillip Nelson also hurts the Nebraska defense with his legs, rushing for 55 yards on eight carries.

"We just got pushed and we didn't tackle well," coach Bo Pelini said. "On defense, we had way too many breakdowns ... I'm talking basic football that we couldn't execute and didn't execute."

By the end of the game, the Huskers earned six fewer first downs and 11 fewer points. Fans spilled over the walls of TCF Bank Stadium, rushing the field.

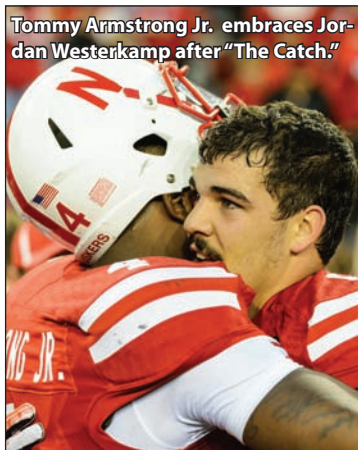
Turnovers, which earlier in the season were Nebraska's friend, started to work against them. The Huskers failed to earn a takeaway and coughed the ball up once on the ground and once through the air, a sign of bad times to come.

Fans again begin to grumble and wonder about a potential replacement for Pelini.

Game 8

Nebraska 27, Northwestern 24

Nov. 2, 2013 in Lincoln



Tommy Armstrong Jr. embraces Jordan Westerkamp after "The Catch."

JIM RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

The Miracle at Memorial. Westerkatch. The Moustache Miracle. With time winding down, the Huskers take one final shot at the end zone.

Former third-string walk-on quarterback Ron Kellogg III heaves a pass into the end zone, leveraging all of his body weight.

The ball comes down and bounces off a Northwestern glove in a mass of bodies at the goal line. Redshirt freshman receiver Jordan Westerkamp, waiting behind the cluster in the end zone, runs forward and grabs the ball, taps his feet down inside the end zone, and falls forward. Touchdown. The Huskers had won.

"I didn't know I could throw it that far," Kellogg said. "But thank God for Jordan Westerkamp."

The Wildcats played the game without starting running back Venric Mark and relied on a less-than-healthy Kain Colter at quarterback. Still, the Wildcats led late. Nebraska took the ball, chipping away, with Kellogg at the helm. Passes to receiver Sam Burtch gained critical yards. A dump-off pass to Ameer Abdullah on fourth down turned into a 16-yard gain, one yard past the first down marker, giving the Huskers hope.

"People will probably forget about that play by tonight or tomorrow," Pelini said. "But that was a huge play."

Four seconds and 49 yards were left, separating the Huskers from the end zone and a win.

Despite the improbability, Kellogg and Westerkamp pulled it off.

Game 9

Nebraska 17, Michigan 13

Nov. 9, 2013 in Ann Arbor, Mich.



Ameer Abdullah dives into the endzone for the winning score.

BRYAN FULLER/MGOBLOG.COM

The Huskers came into Michigan Stadium, the largest football venue in the United States, and ended the Wolverines' FBS-best 19-game home winning streak in a game dominated by defense.

The Blackshirts defense held Michigan's offense to its second-consecutive negative rushing game.

The Wolverines lost 21 yards on the ground, making up only 196 through the air.

The Huskers managed to stay positive, but totaled only 273 total yards.

Late in the game, the Huskers needed a conversion on fourth down and short to stay alive, trailing 14-10.

Rather than handing the ball to running back Ameer Abdullah, who was averaging 4 yards per carry, offensive coordinator opted to air it out.

"I looked and was like 'Psh, they're all up in (the box), let's just throw it out there,'" Beck said. "It's pitch and catch."

A short pass to receiver Kenny Bell picked up the first down. A block by Sam Burtch sprung Bell for more.

By the end of the run, Bell had reached the 5-yard line after 26-yards of weaving.

Shortly thereafter, Abdullah dove in from 5 yards out to give the Huskers the lead and his second touchdown of the game.

Abdullah finished with 105 yards on 27 carries, which averaged out to 3.9 yards per carry.

The Blackshirts defense would hold, sending the Huskers home with an important victory.

2013 SEASON RECAP

Game 10 Mich. State 41, Nebraska 28 Nov. 16, 2013 in Lincoln



Sam Burtch waits for the ball on his touchdown catch.

JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

The Huskers and Spartans matched up in Lincoln with the Legends Division lead in the balance. A win for Nebraska, and they would hold the tie-breaker over the Spartans. A loss, and the possibility of a return trip to Indianapolis for the Big Ten Championship would look bleak.

The Huskers outgained the Spartans on the ground and through the air. They earned more first downs, had fewer penalties and wrapped up more sacks.

But turnovers proved disastrous. Four lost fumbles and an interception ruined the Huskers' high hopes.

"We couldn't overcome ourselves," coach Bo Pelini said.

The Huskers kept finding themselves within striking distance, somehow.

Husker running back Ameer Abdullah became the first running back to rush for more than 100 yards against the elite Spartans defense all season. Teammate Imani Cross added his own chunk of yardage with a 51-yard TD run.

But when it wasn't turnovers hurting the Huskers, it was drops.

Cornerback Stanley Jean-Baptiste dropped an interception in the fourth quarter, with the Huskers trailing by only 6. Nebraska's next possession stalled after a drop on third down by tight end Jake Long.

Michigan State would fake a field goal, pick up a first down, and eventually punch in a touchdown, sealing the win on its next drive.

A late touchdown ratcheted the final score up to 41-28 in a loss that again warmed Pelini's hot seat.

Game 11 Nebraska 23, Penn State 20 Nov. 23, 2013 in State College, Pa.



Ron Kellogg III helped lead NU to an overtime victory.

GARRETT EWALD/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Wind blowing through Beaver Stadium fused with bone-chilling temperatures and snow to limit both offenses in a game that narrowed down to the legs of two scrawny kickers.

After a pair of 140-yard rushing efforts by Nebraska's and Penn State's top-flight running backs, the teams headed to overtime.

Penn State's first series stalled. Kicker Sam Ficken, who missed the team's first extra point, trotted on for a 37-yard field goal, hoping to put his team on the board. But his kick sailed right.

Husker kicker Pat Smith trotted on to try and win the game in overtime after the Huskers failed to convert a first down. Late in the fourth quarter, he had tied the game with a field goal a few plays after Husker receiver Sam Burtch was called for an unnecessary block on an Ameer Abdullah touchdown run.

He, like Ficken, attempted a 37-yard kick in overtime. His was good, but a lineman had moved early.

Stepping back 5 yards, he reassured his teammates – he's got this.

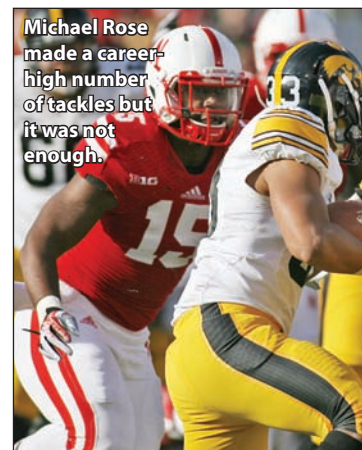
Indeed he did.

"This is what you dream about," Smith said. "This is the reason why I transferred to Nebraska for my final year of eligibility."

In the third quarter after Penn State had taken the lead 13-7, Kenny Bell sparked the Huskers with a 99-yard kick off return for a touchdown.

Quincy Enunwa scored NU's only other touchdown on a 27-yard catch.

Game 12 Iowa 38, Nebraska 17 Nov. 29, 2013 in Lincoln



Michael Rose made a career-high number of tackles but it was not enough.

JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

The Huskers experience more of the same old headaches, losing to Iowa in Lincoln for the first time since 1943. Just like against Michigan State, the Huskers outperformed Iowa in first downs, passing yards and total yards, but lost two fumbles and threw two interceptions.

The Hawkeyes capitalized, jumping out to an early two-touchdown lead. But early turnovers didn't seal Nebraska's fate entirely. Just like against the Spartans, the Huskers still found themselves within reach late in the game.

A touchdown pass to Quincy Enunwa – his 10th of the season – brought the Huskers back within one touchdown.

The Blackshirts held, giving the offense the ball back. Nebraska running back Ameer Abdullah, the Huskers' workhorse back, took a handoff and coughed the ball up after taking a hit.

"It's almost become kind of who we are," senior offensive tackle Jeremiah Sirles said. "That really sucks. It's almost like we can't hold on to the ball for certain things."

Iowa punched in a fourth quarter touchdown, then another.

Frustrations reached a peak earlier in the game, when coach Bo Pelini protested a pass interference call by waving his hat in the face of an official, earning a \$10,000 fine for Nebraska.

Never had Husker Nation been more split regarding Pelini's status as head coach than it was after the loss to Iowa.

In the post-game press conference, Pelini addressed rumors of his job being in jeopardy. Later that week, athletic director Shawn Eichorst voiced his support for Pelini.

Breaking Down NU's Season Stats

NEBRASKA TEAM RANKS

YARDS PER GAME: 421.2 (5 BIG, 59 NCAA)

PASSING YPG: 199.5 (11 BIG, 93 NCAA)

RUSHING YPG: 221.7 (3 BIG, 19 NCAA)

POINTS PER GAME: 32.6 (5 BIG, 45 NCAA)

PPG ALLOWED: 25.3 (6 BIG, 53 NCAA)

YPG ALLOWED: 366.9 (5 BIG, 39 NCAA)

Ameer Abdullah turned in the seventh-best all-time single season rushing total during the 2013 regular season.



RUSHING TOTAL YARDS - NCAA

1. A. Williams - BC - 2,102
2. B. Sankey - WASH - 1,775
3. A. Andrews - WKU - 1,730
4. K. Carey - ARI - 1,716
5. T. Mason - AUB - 1,621
8. **A. Abdullah - NEB - 1,568 (1st - Big Ten)**
10. M. Gordon - WIS - 1,466 (2nd - Big Ten)
12. C. Hyde - OSU - 1,408 (3rd - Big Ten)

YARDS PER CARRY 175+ RUSHES - NCAA

1. M. Gordon - WIS - 8.1 (1st - Big Ten)
2. C. Hyde - OSU - 7.7 (2nd - Big Ten)
3. J. Hill - LSU - 6.8
4. A. Andrews - WKU - 6.5
5. A. Williams - BC - 6.4
6. J. White - WIS - 6.4 (3rd - Big Ten)
8. **A. Abdullah - NEB - 6.2 (4th - Big Ten)**
33. D. Cobb - MINN - 5.1 (5th - Big Ten)

JIM RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

PUNT RETURNS – TEAM – NCAA YARDS PER PUNT RETURN

1. North Carolina – 17.1 yards per return – long of 85
2. Boise State – 15.7 yards per return – long of 48
3. Kansas State – 15.3 yards per return – long of 79
4. Oklahoma – 15.2 yards per return – long of 91
5. Iowa – 15.0 yards per return – long of 83 (1st – Big Ten)
87. Michigan – 6.3 yards per return – long of 30 (11th – Big Ten)



121. Nebraska – 3.0

yards per return – long of 19 (Last – Big Ten)

122. California – 2.7 yards per return – long of 13
123. Mississippi State – 2.7 yards per return – long of 23

TEAM SACKS - NCAA

- T1. Ohio State – 40.0 (1st – Big Ten)
- T1. Arizona State – 40.0
- T1. Stanford – 40.0
- T4. Louisville – 39.0
- T4. Utah – 39.0
- T4. Fresno State – 39.0

T14. Nebraska – 35.0 (2nd – Big Ten)

T33. Michigan State – 31.0 (3rd – Big Ten)

DEFENSE THIRD DOWN PERCENTAGE – TEAM – NCAA

1. LSU – 58.6 percent – 82-of-140
2. Louisville – 55.9 percent – 90-of-161
3. Florida State – 55.2 percent – 80-of-145
14. Ohio State – 49.4 percent – 77-of-156 (1st – Big Ten)
17. Illinois – 47.6 percent – 81-of-170 (2nd – Big Ten)
- T22. Indiana – 46.7 percent – 86-of-184 (3rd – Big Ten)
- 66. Nebraska – 39.9 percent – 69-of-173 (9th – Big Ten)**

FEWEST YARDS PENALIZED – NCAA

1. Navy – 254 yards
2. Tulsa – 305 yards
3. Army – 340 yards
9. Penn State – 403 yards (1st – Big Ten)
10. Minnesota – 404 yards (2nd – Big Ten)
11. Michigan – 409 yards (3rd – Big Ten)
- 80. Nebraska – 615 yards (11th – Big Ten)**

INTERCEPTIONS – NCAA

1. A. Harris – VIR – 8
- T2. D. Smith – FAU – 7
- T2. L. Doss – TUL – 7
- T4. B. Countess – MICH – 6 (T1st – Big Ten)
- T4. R. Allen – PUR – 6 (T1st – Big Ten)
- T4. 9 Others – 6

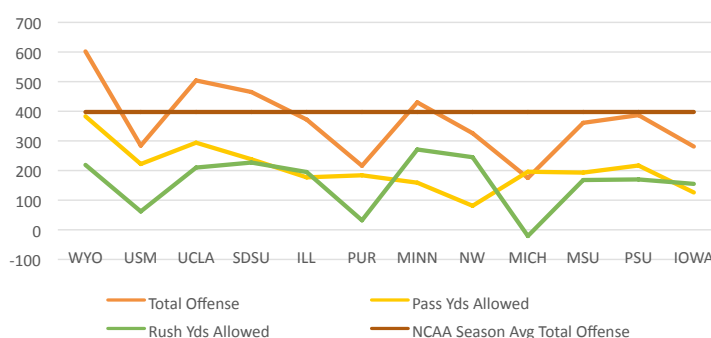
T15. S. Jean-Baptiste – NEB – 4 (T3rd – Big Ten)

T15. C. Evans – NEB – 4 (T3rd – Big Ten)

Total Offense: Pass Yds All Rush Yds All NCAA Season Avg Total Offense

WYO	602	383	219	397.6
USM	284	222	62	397.6
UCLA	504	294	210	397.6
SDSU	465	238	227	397.6
ILL	372	177	195	397.6
PUR	216	184	32	397.6
MINN	430	159	271	397.6
NW	326	81	245	397.6
MICH	175	196	-21	397.6
MSU	361	193	168	397.6
PSU	387	217	170	397.6
IOWA	281	126	155	397.6
	366.92	205.83	161.08	

Yards Allowed Per Game by Nebraska



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Breaking Down NU's Season Stats

PASSING COMPLETION PERCENTAGE (MIN 50 PASS ATTEMPTS) - BIG TEN

1. K. Colter - NW - 78.8
2. K. Guiton - OSU - 68.8
3. N. Scheelhaase - ILL - 66.7
4. B. Miller - OSU - 63.2
5. **T. Martinez - NEB - 62.7**
7. **R. Kellogg III - NEB - 60.6**
17. **T. Armstrong Jr. - NEB - 53.0**



RECEPTIONS - BIG TEN

1. A. Robinson - PSU - 97
2. J. Gallon - MICH - 80
3. J. Abbrederis - WIS - 73
4. C. Latimer - IND - 72
5. S. Hull - 59
6. C. Brown - OSU - 55
7. T. Jones - NW - 55
8. C. Jones - NW - 54
9. **K. Bell - NEB - 51**

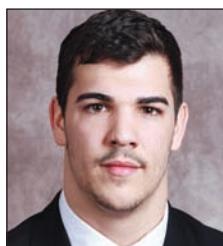


RECEIVING TOUCHDOWN - NCAA

1. D. Adams - FRES - 23
- T2. B. Cooks - ORST - 15
- T2. C. Jones - SJSU - 15
- T12. S. Wynn - IND - 11 (1st - Big Ten)
- T17. Q. Enunwa - NEB - 10 (T2nd - Big Ten)**
- T17. C. Brown - OSU - 10 - (T2nd - Big Ten)

YARDS PER RECEPTIONS (MIN. 20 RECEPTIONS) - BIG TEN

1. D. Yancey - PUR - 17.1
2. S. Hull - ILL - 16.8
3. J. Gallon - MICH - 16.1
4. D. Engel - MINN - 16.0
5. K. Hughes - IND - 15.7
6. D. Smith - OSU - 15.6
7. B. Fowler - MSU - 15.4
8. C. Latimer - IND - 15.2
9. R. Lawrence - NW - 14.9
10. A. Robinson - PSU - 14.8
11. J. Abbrederis - WIS - 14.4
- 12. J. Westerkamp - NEB - 14.2**
13. S. Wynn - IND - 13.8
- 14. Q. Enunwa - NEB - 13.3**

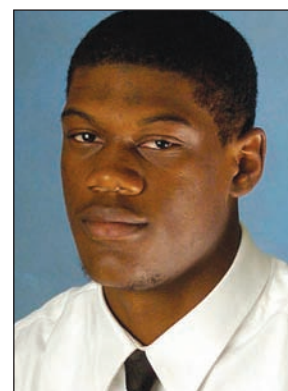


TURNOVER MARGIN - NCAA

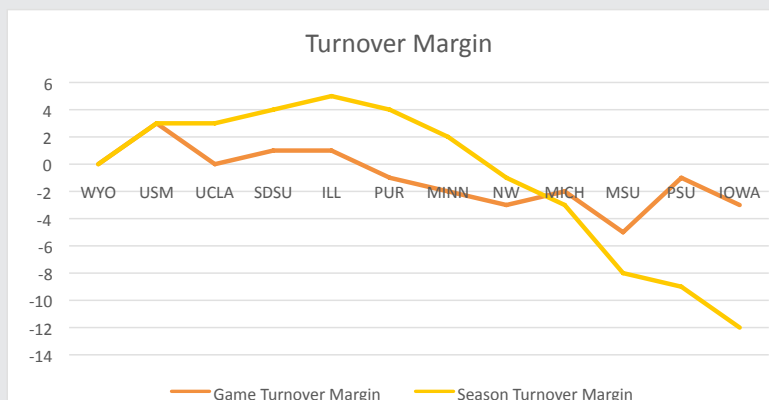
1. Houston - +25
2. Florida State - +17
- T3. Missouri - +16
- T3. Louisville - +16
- T7. Michigan State - +14 (1st - Big Ten)
- T22. Ohio State - +7 (2nd - Big Ten)
- T35. Michigan - +5 (3rd - Big Ten)
- T118. Nebraska - -12 (Last - Big Ten)**

SACKS - NCAA

1. T. Murphy - STAN - 14.0
2. M. Smith - LOU - 12.5
- T3. 4 players - 12.0
- T17. R. Gregory - NEB - 9.5 (1st - Big Ten)**
- T17. 4 others - 9.5
- T37. N. Spence - OSU - 8.0 (2nd - Big Ten)
- T41. S. Calhoun - MSU - 7.5 (T3rd - Big Ten)
- T41. T. Cockran - MINN - 7.5 (T3rd - Big Ten)

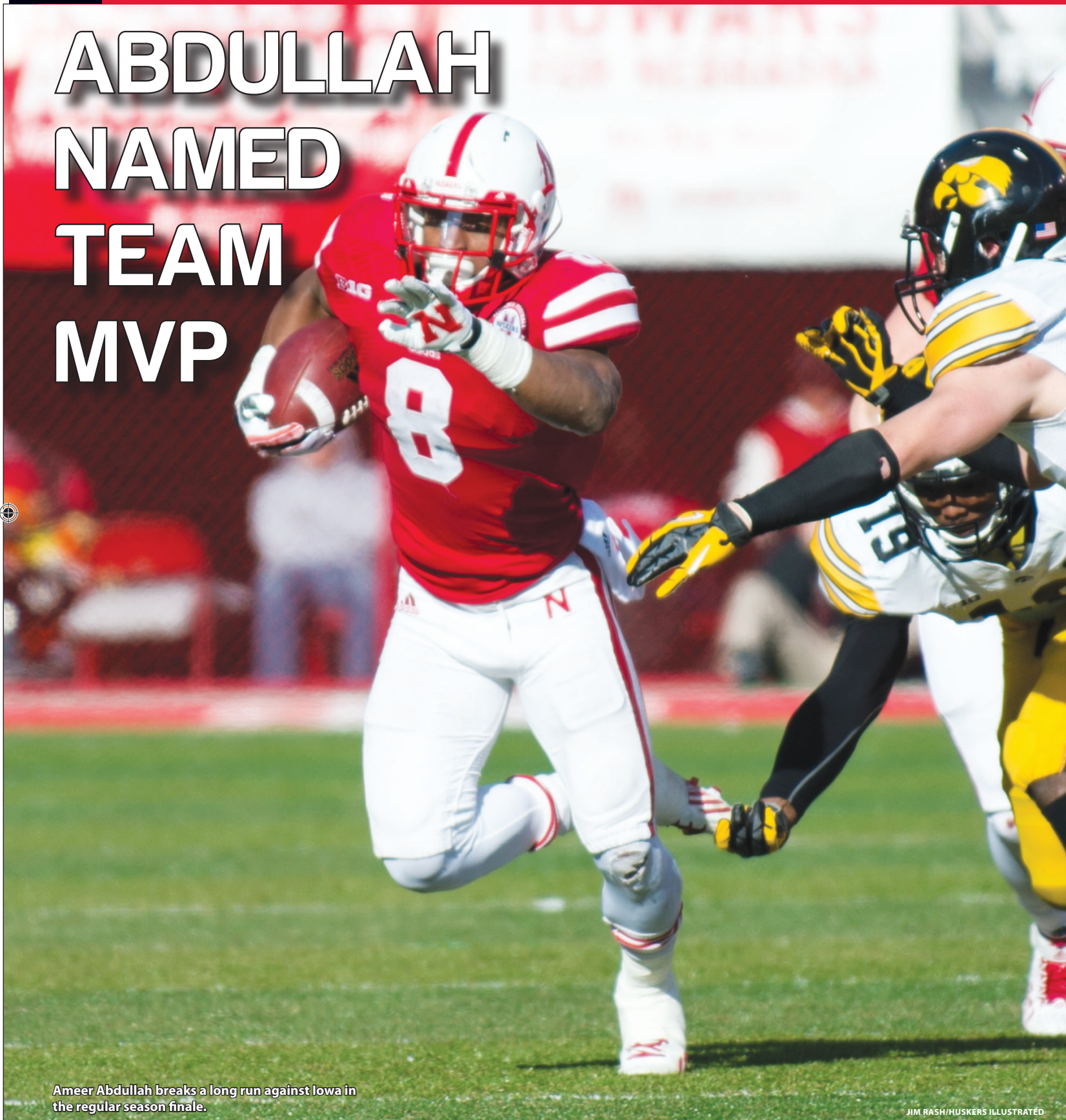


Opponent	Turnover Margin	Season Turnover Margin
WYO	0	0
USM	3	3
UCLA	0	3
SDSU	1	4
ILL	1	5
PUR	-1	4
MINN	-2	2
NW	-3	-1
MICH	-2	-3
MSU	-5	-8
PSU	-1	-9
IOWA	-3	-12



2MinuteDrill

ABDULLAH NAMED TEAM MVP



Ameer Abdullah breaks a long run against Iowa in the regular season finale.

JIM RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

2MinuteDrill

By Darren Ivy, Lanny Holstein & Chris Peters

Junior I-back Ameer Abdullah led the list of honorees, as the Nebraska football team gathered for its 2013 banquet on Sunday afternoon at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln.

Abdullah was named the overall Team Most Valuable Player and earned the prestigious Lifter of the Year Award for the second-straight year. The 5-9, 190-pound Abdullah is the second player in the past three years to win the Lifter of the Year Award in back-to-back seasons, after Rex Burkhead won the award in 2010 and 2011.

Abdullah was also named a 2013 team captain. The Huskers elected four captains before the start of the season, and Abdullah and senior defensive end Jason Ankrah were announced as additional captains on Sunday. Abdullah and Ankrah joined season-long captains Quincy Enunwa, Spencer Long, Taylor Martinez and Ciente Evans.

In addition to his role as captain, Enunwa was also named the team's Offensive MVP, after catching 10 touchdown passes and moving into the top 10 on Nebraska's career receiving charts. Sophomore defensive end Randy Gregory was voted as the Defensive MVP. The first-year Husker leads the Big Ten with 9.5 sacks, with nine of his sacks in conference play. Senior place-kicker Pat Smith was awarded the Special Teams MVP Award. Smith connected on 11-of-12 field goals in his lone season in Lincoln.

Senior offensive tackle Jeremiah Sirles was announced as the winner of the Chamberlin Trophy. The award dates back to 1967 and is voted on by members of the media, and honors a senior player who has the qualities and dedication of the great Cornhusker tradition.

Senior center Cole Pensick, a Lincoln native and second-generation Husker, was presented the Cletus Fischer Native Son Award, given annually to a senior who is a Nebraska native. The award is named in honor of long-time Nebraska offensive line coach Cletus Fischer.

Senior quarterback Ron Kellogg III was presented the Tom Novak Trophy. The oldest of Nebraska's senior awards, the Novak Trophy dates back to 1950. The Chamberlin, Native Son and Novak awards will also be honored at the Outland Trophy Award ceremony in Omaha on Jan. 9.

Sophomore receiver Sam Burtch was awarded the Huskers' 2013 Walk-on MVP Award, while linebacker Courtney Love was named the Scout Team Defensive MVP and I-back Adam Taylor was the Scout Team Offensive MVP. The Bobby Reynolds Award went to tight end Jake Long.

The Character Award went to WR Taariq Allen, OG Mike Moudy and OL Scott Criss. Allen also won the Pat Clare Award. The Husker Heart Award went to OT Brandon Chapek.

PELINI GETS SUPPORT FROM EICHORST

Following Nebraska's 38-17 loss to Iowa on Black Friday, athletic director Shawn Eichorst issued a statement in response to rampant rumors that coach Bo Pelini would be fired or be forced to resign following the season.

"My approach has always been to not comment publicly about our coaches until their full seasons are complete, as I strongly believe it is unfair and counter to best practices," Eichorst said in the statement. "However, given the volume of unfounded speculation and conjecture about our head football coach, I want to reaffirm what I have said many times since I have arrived at the University of Nebraska -- that I positively respect, appreciate and support our football student-athletes, coaches and staff, as we do everyone in the Husker family. We very much look forward to our upcoming bowl game and coach Pelini continuing to lead our program in the future."

Pelini responded with a statement of his own.

"I want to thank our administration and Shawn Eichorst in particular, for his continued and full support that he has given me and our football program since his arrival on campus," the statement read. "I am honored to represent this university and its great fans, and I'm proud to lead this program into the future."

The coach's statement went on to apologize for cussing in his postgame press conference following the Iowa game - a move that earned him a reprimand and \$10,000 fine

HIS TOP 5

MOST EXCITING BOWL REMATCHES IN HUSKER HISTORY

1 1994 ORANGE

Florida State (L 18-16)
L 27-14 in 1993 Orange

2 1995 ORANGE

Miami (W 24-17)
L 22-0 in 1992 Orange

3 2000 FIESTA

Tennessee (W 31-21)
W 42-17 in 1998 Orange

4 1985 SUGAR

LSU (W 28-10)
W 21-20 in 1983 Orange

5 1967 SUGAR

(Alabama (L 34-7)
L 39-28 in 1966 Orange

The Huskers rarely find themselves in a rematch with a former foe. Occasionally, young Huskers will get a second swing at an opponent within a couple years. When it happens, fans are either disappointed they don't get a new team or they're excited they get a second shot, especially avenging a loss. Nebraska's felt the sting of a second loss, the glory of a second win and the thrill of redemption.

from the Big Ten Conference.

"I apologize for reacting emotionally yesterday and for showing frustration both with the game officials and the media," he said. "I fully understand and respect their difficult jobs, and I regret any and all actions or words which may have shed a negative light on our program and university. Accountability is a core belief throughout our program, and as the head coach, I must set and maintain a high standard.

"Our football staff is hitting recruiting full throttle and looking forward to the upcoming bowl game. We are committed to working with Shawn and our entire department staff to continue to build this program and bring championships back to Nebraska."

TWELVE HUSKERS NAMED TO ALL-BIG TEN TEAM

A dozen Nebraska players earned all-conference honors, three on the first-team by either the coaches or media panel.

Junior running back Ameer Abdullah and sophomore defensive end Randy Gregory were first-team All-Big Ten selections on both the media and coaches teams, while senior defensive back Ciente Evans joined them on the coaches first team.

Abdullah's season is one of the best for a running back in Nebraska history. The Homewood, Ala., native has rushed for 1,568 yards and eight touchdowns this season, and finished second in the conference in rushing yards per game. His rushing total is the fifth-best in school history and the best by a Nebraska player since 1997. Abdullah was honored by the Big Ten for the second straight season after earning second-team all-conference honors as a sophomore.

Gregory quickly became one of the Big Ten's top pass rushers in his first season in Lincoln. He leads the Big Ten with 9.5 sacks - nine coming in conference play. Gregory also ranks second in the conference in tackles for loss at 17 and leads Nebraska with 17 quarterback hurries. Gregory's selection marks the fifth time in Bo Pelini's six seasons as head coach that Nebraska has had a first-team all-conference defensive lineman.

A senior captain, Evans has been the vocal leader of the Nebraska defense this season. The Arlington, Texas native has intercepted four passes, while adding five pass breakups. Evans also has 44 tackles, including 11 tackles for loss and three sacks. Evans' choice as a first-team All-Big Ten performer marks the fifth consecutive year Nebraska has had at least one first-team all-conference defensive

10 questions

with Vincent Valentine
Freshman Defensive Tackle



1 Earlier in the season, when Randy Gregory returned an interception for a touchdown, coaches joked that when he dropped an INT in practice, they should put you out there. What does that mean?

VV: They joke around like that all the time, just because I'm a big guy and they want me to run around. It's always funny when they joke around like that.

3 As the season dragged on, you saw your reps increase, what did you have to do to get in that condition?

VV: I've always ran after practice just to keep my conditioning up and watch my weight during the year.

4 Has that helped you become more of an every-down type of guy?

VV: That's definitely what one of my goals is. Sometimes, the coaches, they're kind of skeptical about that, but I try and come out and practice as hard as I can to show them I can be an every-down kind of guy.

5 You've played on punt and field goal units as a blocker. Why did they come to you?

VV: I was really the only one they had. All the offensive linemen were going down and they were just like 'You've got to get ready for field goal.' I was like 'Wow.' And my eyes opened. I was like 'OK, I've got to do what I've got to do.'

7 Why those guys?

VV: Since me and Aaron play the same position, we watch both sides of the line, because we might both play either the left or the right side. Avery, we're always together a lot, so we just watch film together too.

8 What is it like on the other end, seeing the rushers come at you instead of the other way around?

VV: I just try to stay stout in there and make sure I don't let a guy get through my gap. You don't want to be the guy to let the guy get through and block the field goal for their team.

10 Have you ever played offensive?

VV: Kind of. In high school, my sophomore year, I played a little bit of offensive line, but I never actually started there in high school. I always played defensive line. I played a little tight end, so I got some blocking in, but that was about it.

2 In the off-season, you dropped some weight to get in better shape. What did you have to change to do that?

VV: Just picking out the foods I need to eat better. I probably ate more chicken breast than anything. Just cutting the junk food out, that's what really helped me shed a few pounds.

6 When you dive into the playbook, who do you study with?

VV: During the season, I usually try to study by myself. I can concentrate better and I focus better. When I go in to watch film, I like to watch with Avery (Moss) and Aaron Curry.

9 After playing a full Big Ten season, does it live up to the reputation for being a grueling beat-you-up kind of conference?

VV: Growing up, I always watched the Big Ten and I always wondered what it would be like playing out there. This year definitely opened my eyes. I've gotten used to playing in the Big Ten and just knowing it's going to be a battle every week.

~As interviewed by Huskers Illustrated's Chris Peters

GEORGIA PREDICTIONS

LANNY HOLSTEIN SAYS:

**Georgia 34
Nebraska 21**

Nebraska wins if: It has something up its sleeve for the Bulldogs. The Huskers are outmatched talent-wise in this game, so they will need to do something out of the ordinary in their game plan to confuse their SEC opponent.

Georgia wins if: They can find their rhythm under junior quarterback Huston Mason. The Bulldog offense hasn't skipped much of a beat since losing senior signal caller Aaron Murray to injury. Mason has stepped in and lead the team to 59- and 41-point performances against Kentucky and Georgia Tech. Nebraska has a better defense than those schools, so this will be a matchup to watch.

Key player: Randy Gregory. If RG44 can dial up his usual assortment of quarterback pressures and wreak havoc in the Georgia backfield, it could be tough on an inexperienced Georgia quarterback.

CHRIS PETERS SAYS:

**Georgia 35
Nebraska 31**

Nebraska wins if: It plays a clean game. Minimizing turnovers and penalties will put the Huskers on track for success. When they aren't their own worst enemy, the Huskers have shown they can hang with anyone.

Georgia wins if: It gets running back Todd Gurley going early. The Bulldogs' top rusher will need to have a big game against the Husker front seven to free up passing lanes against an above-average Blackshirts secondary.

Key player: RB Todd Gurley. Nebraska's front seven has been up-and-down all season. Gurley is one of the most talented backs in the country and should provide a tough test for the Blackshirts.

back. In addition to being a first-team choice on the coaches' team, Evans was a second-team All-Big Ten pick by the media panel.

Two other Huskers earned second-team accolades. Cornerback Stanley Jean-Baptiste was a second-team choice on both teams, while senior center Cole Pensick earned second-team honors from the Big Ten coaches.

Six other Huskers earned honorable-mention all-conference honors. The coaches' honorable mention all-conference list included defensive end Jason Ankrah, wide receiver Kenny Bell, safety Corey Cooper and offensive linemen Andrew Rodriguez and Jeremiah Sirles. Honorable-mention choices according to the media panel were Ankrah, Bell, Pensick, Rodriguez, Sirles and place-kicker Pat Smith. Senior fullback C.J. Zimmerer was chosen as Nebraska's Sportsmanship honoree.

THREE HUSKERS NAMED ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICANS

Three Huskers earned Capital One Academic All-American status this past week. Guard Spencer Long was a first-team selection, while tight end Jake Long and fullback C.J. Zimmerer were named to the second team.

Nebraska is the only school with three players on the team, with six schools having two honorees each. This marks the third straight year Nebraska has had multiple Academic All-Americans in football, boasting three in 2011 and two in 2012.

In Bo Pelini's six seasons as Nebraska head coach, the Huskers have had 11 first- or second-team academic All-America picks, the second-most in the country in that time period, trailing only Penn State's 14.

The three honorees also increase Nebraska's nation-leading totals of academic All-Americans in football and across all sports. Spencer Long's first-team selection gives Nebraska 69 CoSIDA first-team Academic All-America picks, and the additional second-team honorees give the Huskers 107 all-time first- or second-team academic All-Americans in football. Notre Dame is second in the nation with 58 football academic All-Americans. Across all sports, Nebraska increased its nation-leading total to 310 academic All-Americans. Notre Dame is second in all sports with 234.

Spencer Long carries a 3.79 grade-point average in biological sciences and plans to pursue medical school after graduation. He's a three-time CoSIDA Academic All-District selection, and was a second-team All-American in 2012. Long is the first Nebraska offensive lineman to earn academic All-America honors since Kurt Mann was a first-team choice in 2005.

Jake Long owns a 3.86 grade-point average in biological sciences and, like his brother, also plans on a medical career following graduation. Jake Long is a two-time first-team academic all-district pick. On the field, Long has been a key contributor at tight end each of the past three seasons and was the veteran of that

group this season.

Zimmerer gives the Huskers three Omaha area natives on the academic All-America team. A criminology and criminal justice major, Zimmerer completed his undergraduate work in December of 2012 with a 3.82 grade-point average. On the field, he's been a regular contributor at fullback for the past three seasons.

HUSKERS HEALING UP

Nebraska is about as healthy as it's been all season heading into the Gator Bowl matchup with Georgia. Everyone except quarterback Taylor Martinez and guard Spencer Long is expected to be available on New Year's Day for the Big Red. Defensive end Jason Ankrah said the couple weeks the Huskers have had off after playing Iowa have been beneficial.

"I'd say so. It's just been a roller coaster this season. These couple days that we've had off have helped out a lot," he said. "We got a chance to pick ourselves back up. We've had a lot of injuries, so it gave a lot of people who were banged up some time to heal up. We're good to go."

Georgia will no doubt be as healthy as possible too with the time off, so Nebraska is preparing for a physical game, according to Ankrah. The Bulldogs will be without starting quarterback and future NFL draft pick Aaron Murray who tore them apart a year ago, so it will be a battle of backups at the quarterback spot.

For offensive lineman Jeremiah Sirles the time away from football and the grind of everyday practice has been a little strange.

"It allows you to kind of step back and be a normal college kid for a little bit," he said. "It's weird. I get bored. You realize what it's like not to have a scheduled everyday event."

EMOTIONS SETTLING DOWN

Things have settled down considerably around the Nebraska program over the last week or so. Immediately following the Huskers' 38-17 loss to Iowa there was a whirlwind of emotion flying around the Nebraska facilities with rumors and speculation running amuck regarding the coaching staff.

"It was an emotional couple of weeks, and emotional way to go out, losing at home and everything," Nebraska offensive lineman Jeremiah Sirles said. "I'm going to use that as motivation because I don't want to go out as a loser. I want to go out as a winner in my last big game against Georgia."

The Huskers get one last chance to change the tide New Year's Day in Jacksonville, and that's what they plan to do. Sirles said he wants the win for the senior class as well as for the coaches who have been through a lot this season.

"I think with all the coaches you could see throughout the year the stress wear on them, lack of sleep and the whole bit," Sirles said. "I think they did a really good job not letting it pour over into our room, not letting it affect us."



RECRUITING NOTEBOOK

BY MICHAEL SCHAEFER
RECRUITING EDITOR,
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

Huskers land JUCO defensive linemen

Husker coaches still looking to finish out strong in January with 2014 recruiting class.

Nebraska will enter the 2014 season with some immediate help on the defensive line.

Following a statement of confidence from NU to Bo Pelini, the Husker coach hit the recruiting trail and landed a pair of junior college players that should help build a strong point of attack in the trenches.

It started on Dec. 1 when Dodge City Community College defensive tackle Terrell Clinkscales committed to Nebraska. For the nation's No. 1 JUCO defensive tackle, it all started with Bo Pelini.

Clinkscales committed shortly after his visit for the Iowa weekend.

"Everybody showed a lot of love and it's a great feeling knowing that coach Bo isn't going anywhere," he said. "That statement said he wasn't going anywhere. It's kind of hard to release a guy that's won 70 percent of his games. He's a great coach. What people don't realize is Nebraska was winning games with kids that normally wouldn't be playing this

year. Guys like a third string quarterback or a scout team offensive line? That's pretty amazing. That shows what type of coach he is."

Another big reason that Clinkscales made the call for the Huskers? He saw first-hand how good future teammate Vincent Valentine can be. That also sold him on the potential of the line. Clinkscales noted that he was impressed by how well Valentine played against Iowa.

"He had a solid game, man," Clinkscales said. "He had a big game, a monster game. He made plays when Nebraska needed them. That's what you ask of a defensive tackle."

Clinkscales, a 247Sports composite four-star, chose the Huskers over offers from quite a few big name schools including Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kansas State, Ohio State, Texas Tech and others. The defensive tackle has taken three official visits, but said he's happy to cement his spot with Nebraska.

"It is a great feeling," he said. "I feel like I can focus on everything else. I can fo-

cus on football now because we've got a bowl game coming up. I focus on school and getting that work done. I can focus on getting everything else and I don't have to worry about recruiting anymore."

Nebraska's courtship of Keels was a little different. The Huskers had to win a big recruiting battle over fellow Big Ten school Wisconsin, who Keels had committed to earlier that fall.

It turned out to be a math class that changed everything. He said the Huskers did a great job in recruiting him and were particularly diligent in making sure the defensive lineman found the right math class that would allow him to graduate early and have him eligible at the next level. To Keels that put the Huskers above and beyond.

"Nebraska coaches were checking on me, were looking for that class for me to get into and I didn't feel that from anybody else," he said.

Keels, a 6-foot-4, 270-pound defensive end from Highland Community College in Kansas will likely drop some weight during the

spring. Unlike Clinkscales, he'll be able to enroll early, and that will allow him to go through spring ball.

The Huskers added a second JUCO defensive lineman but Keels will slot in as a defensive end. He's looking to provide help opposite of Randy Gregory, alongside Avery Moss.

"I think I can bring some pass rush and I think between me and Randy we can play with each other wreak some havoc," he said.

Nebraska's newest commit said the Huskers are putting together a strong group that includes fellow JUCOs Terrell Clinkscales and Byerson Cockrell – a cornerback that committed on Dec. 6 – and it could include several more by the time it's over.

That group combined with the coaching staff and the returning players has Keels thinking big for his new team.

"We're not thinking just Big Ten champs," he said. "We're thinking about National Champs."

N

Abdullah sticks it out, perseveres in a big way during tough 2013 season

BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

WITH NEBRASKA HOME FOR THE Big Ten title game and coaches hitting the road hard recruiting during the first two weeks of December, Nebraska's players had a chance to rest, take finals and start preparing for the bowl game with Georgia.

There were plenty of injuries that befell Nebraska players this fall, and Ameer Abdullah was no exception, battling a nagging injury for most of the second half of the 2013 season that was never bad enough to keep him off the field.

It would be unfair to say that Abdullah broke onto the scene this past season. He had a 1,000 yard rushing season in 2012 in place of Rex Burkhead, but Abdullah's 2013 season certainly has to be considered among the best in program history, especially when you consider what he had to deal with on the field.

As a junior, Abdullah ran for 1,568 yards and eight touchdowns – the fifth-best total in program history – and he could pass Mike Rozier for fourth place in program history with a strong performance against Georgia in the Gator Bowl.

Abdullah earned first-team All-Big Ten honors from the conference media and coaches, but consider what he's dealt with this season.

Starting quarterback, and rushing threat Taylor Martinez went down for almost the entire season in the second half of the UCLA game. So for most of the season, Abdullah has been Nebraska's primary running threat.

After Martinez went down, injuries along the offensive line began to build up like a snowball rolling down a hill. First was Spencer Long, then Jake Cotton, Cole Pensick, Jeremiah Sirles and Mike Moudy.

Abdullah spent a good portion of the season running behind an offensive line that was pieced together with duct tape and grit. During Big Ten play, Abdullah topped the 100-yard mark seven times while putting together the best rushing season in the program since 1997.

He also battled an ankle injury he suffered in the Minnesota game. Abdullah said he was taking time to heal before Nebraska began its bowl practices in mid-December.

"Just mainly my ankle," Abdullah said. "Things like that take time. The situation we were in I couldn't afford to get off my ankle. I had to keep playing. It wasn't something that was going to hold me out. As long as it was something you could tough out and stick through it, that's what we needed."

Abdullah enjoying this kind of success, and showing the durability he has – he carried the ball 254 times in 12 games – didn't seem immediately possible when he



Abdullah's 2013 season certainly has to be considered among the best in program history, especially when you consider what he had to deal with on the field."

arrived on campus. Abdullah came to Nebraska in the fall of 2011, along with running backs Aaron Green and Braylon Heard. Both Green and Heard were more heralded, and Abdullah was diverse enough that many questioned whether he would be an every-down back.

Of the trio, Green was the first to leave, transferring to TCU prior to the 2012 season. Heard left next, playing in 2012, but transferring to Kentucky after he was moved to defensive back.

Abdullah put in the work, stepping in for Rex Burkhead in 2012 and taking over this year. Many have questioned whether Abdullah, after this year, would opt to leave Nebraska early. His elusiveness and output have certainly caught the eye of NFL teams this season.

Abdullah has put off professional discussions throughout the season, but said in December that he will at least submit his name to an NFL Draft advisory board to see where he could potentially be taken this spring if he were to declare for the draft.

Even those conversations will have to wait. Abdullah said he's focused on getting healthy, and capping his junior season with a bowl win over an SEC foe. Abdullah, an Alabama native, knows plenty of players on Georgia's roster, and wants to give the team momentum going into next spring.

"I'm not going to put that much into it," Abdullah said of the possibility of leaving school early. "I'm just focused on the bowl game, I'm not focused on anything else." **N**

*Read daily Husker reports from
Michael Bruntz at
HuskersIllustrated.com
Follow him on Twitter
@michaelbruntz*

Randy Gregory brings Purdue quarterback Danny Elting down for a safety.



A.J. MAST/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Story By Chris Peters

On the Prowl

Gregory turns into quarterbacks' worst nightmare

WHEN RANDY GREGORY STEPS ONTO THE FOOTBALL FIELD, HE'S HARD TO IGNORE. LIKE A TIGER IN A PETTING ZOO, SOMETHING'S BOUND TO GO WRONG. THE 6-FOOT-6, 255-POUND (AND GROWING) SOPHOMORE DEFENSIVE END HAS MADE A NAME FOR HIMSELF. HIS BIG TEN-LEADING 9.5 SACKS HAVE HUSKER FANS REMINISCING.

Like a certain former-Nebraska d-lineman, currently terrorizing quarterbacks in the NFL, the excitement surrounding Gregory seems to be pouring the foundation of a legacy.

"I'm not throwing him into the Suh category yet, but I think he can have that type of impact on our program down the line," said coach Bo Pelini two days after Gregory's 3-sack performance against Michigan.

Did he just say Suh?

"It's pretty good when the head coach is giving me praise, especially comparing me to a guy like Suh," Gregory said. "...He probably wouldn't say that to my face, but it's good to hear that from coach."

Pelini also likened him to Cowboys great Charles Haley – a member of the 100-sack club – and Willie McGinest – the NFL's postseason sacks record-holder. Talk about a high standard.

Randy Gregory chases down Iowa quarterback Jake Rudock.



JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Pelini acknowledged that he's got a "long way" to go, but has progressed to the point where the difference between stardom and superstardom lies in the details.

When Gregory committed to Nebraska, at 230 pounds, he was a skinny linebacker at best.

Throughout the spring, he ate like John Goodman and lifted like Lou Ferrigno. Rep by rep, he bulked up more than 25 pounds. This offseason, he'll add another 20, if he can.

Coaches knew it would take a while. Pelini said that at this point, "there are a lot of things he hasn't even begun to understand."

But results on the field came immediately. Fans who followed recruiting watched with excitement as he met, then shot past expectations. Casual fans bugged their eyes out, wondering "Who is that?"

Through three games, he left

offensive tackles feeling lame, forcing quick feet and even quicker decisions out of quarterbacks. Teammates dubbed him "The Sackless Wonder."

In his fourth game, he earned half a sack, momentum he would carry through the rest of the season. Only twice – against Illinois and Penn State, both 8 tackle games – did he fail to record a sack. After 12 games, his 9.5 sacks led the Big Ten, earning him All-Conference honors.

As he began to gain confidence, he found teams were lining up running backs on his side. Guards were waiting for him when he cut inside.

He's not surprised. He knows he's gotten better. He has more sacks than he expected, but he's not content yet.

"I'm never satisfied," Gregory said.

NFL Draft experts are beginning to mention his name. ESPN's Mel Kiper Jr. called him

"unblockable," saying "he's got it all." NFLDraftScout.com tabbed him as a "potential first round prospect."

As a third-year sophomore, he could go pro after this season, if he wanted to.

No way, he says. "I've got so much work to do here before I can even consider that."

He's mastered the tutorial. His crash course is over. Now the focus is on the itty bitty details. The things that turn good players into great ones, Pelini says.

Hand placement, footwork, where to place his eyes, which players or motions to key on – all the fundamentals of the position need to be sharpened, he says. Defensive line coach Rick Kaczinski gets on him every day about it.

Coach Kaz knows what he's talking about. Before coming to Nebraska, he sent nine guys into the NFL – four of which

in the two years preceding his move to Lincoln. He's the reason Gregory suits up in scarlet and cream.

"He talks about it a lot," Gregory said. "It's nice to have a coach that has actually coached guys in the league and knows how to approach them and get them to that level. We expect him to do the same with us."

Early in the year, Gregory was as raw as a frozen steak. But sometime around the midpoint of the season, Gregory began to focus more on the little details – a little shift in the eyes or a slightly different stance. Pelini began to notice the same potential he saw in a young Ndamukong Suh.

Gregory wishes he could be Suh. But for the moment, that's a distant apparition. His coaches know what it takes to create a monster like Suh. They've given him the blueprint.

IN THE RedZone

Raiola had his own kind of Aloha for opposing defenses

By Kalani Simpson

Huskers Illustrated

You may or may not have done well in geography in school, but now we're giving you another chance.

Husker geography. That's right – this is the perfect subject for tailgate arguments, bar bets or radio drive-time talk shows (you're welcome).

**Husker
Geography
Part 10**

It's time to answer that age-old question: Who is the best all-time Husker from each state? In the last issue, *Huskers Illustrated* looked at the best players to come out of Florida, which was headlined by Tommie Frazier.

This week we move on to Hawaii, North Dakota and Mississippi.

HAWAII

Dominic Raiola

G/C, 1998-2000

It was as if both Peter brothers somehow jumped into the same body, and decided to play offensive line. He brought attitude, nastiness, borderline insanity to a team that needed a fresh infusion of it, after Jason Peter left. Raiola was a baaaaaad man. And, oh, was it good.

He exploded in anger and celebration. He screamed and shoved and occasionally hit opponents late. He got 15-yard penalties.

He was suspended from speaking to the media for most of his sophomore season after going on a Boz-like rant about hating Texas.

This fire could have consumed him. But it didn't. It drove him. "I think he drives a lot of us," teammate Jon Rutherford once said.

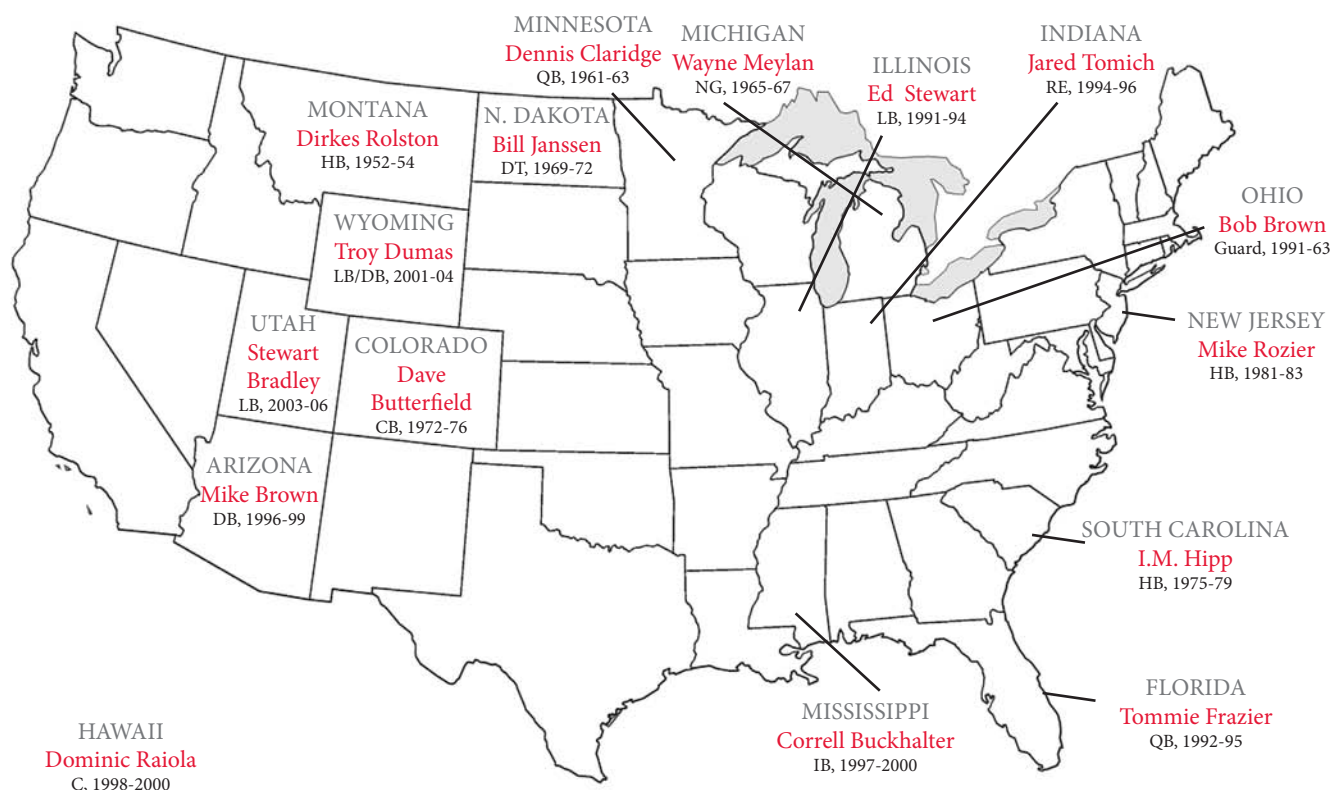
As a sophomore he broke the Nebraska record for pancakes in a season (previously set by the great Aaron Taylor in his senior year). As a junior, he broke it again. He was everybody's All-American. He upheld the Husker tradition

Dominic Raiola blocks against Tennessee during the 2000 Fiesta Bowl victory.



HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED ARCHIVES

All-Time Greatest Huskers From Each State



of being an offensive lineman so visibly dominant he was named ABC player of the game.

In the Fiesta Bowl, after the 1999 season, he dominated Tennessee's John Henderson, who would win the Outland Trophy the next year.

The only thing that kept Raiola from giving the Huskers yet another one of those trophies is that he was so good he left a year early for the pros.

His name and number are up there, above the North Stadium skyboxes. He was a bad man, and it was a good thing. In Nebraska's last great season, 1999, it was Raiola's fire that made the Huskers go.

Toni Fonoti,
G, 1999-2001

Imagine a bulldozer going down the highway at 40 mph. Now put a No. 77 on its back. That was Fonoti. He was not Nebraska's best-ever offensive lineman, but goodness, he was the most dominant. He

obliterated everything in his path.

NORTH DAKOTA
Bill Janssen
DT, 1969-72

He was an Air Force brat and lived all over, but North Dakota claims him thanks to his junior and senior years of high school there.

Janssen was a captain as a senior and a starter as a junior on the 1971 national championship team.

He was on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* when the Huskers beat Alabama in the Orange Bowl.

He was on one of the most loaded defensive lines of all time. He was one of Devaney's boys.

Darin Erstad
P, 1994

He was an All-American baseball player for Nebraska (he's now the coach). But he was also a key contributor to the 1994

national championship team.

Brent Qvale
OT, 2010-13

Started every game as a junior, blocking for two 1,000-yard rushers. Continues to contribute as a "rotation" player on the offensive line.

MISSISSIPPI
Correll Buckhalter
I-Back, 1997-2000

Left as Nebraska eighth all-time rusher despite never really getting the chance to be "the man" – started only 10 games in four seasons. Relentless competitor who kept coming. Always there for Nebraska, rushing for 11 100-yard games.

Brandon Jackson
IB, 2004-06

Almost cracked 1,000 yards rushing in his junior year before declaring early for the pro draft.

THE **BIG** TEN BEAT

Everything Comes Up Roses For Spartans

Seven Big Ten teams prepare for bowl season, including four on New Year's Day | DOUG GRIFFITHS

Defense really does win championships. Just ask Michigan State.

The Spartans hung their hat all season long on their stellar defense and it certainly didn't disappoint.

As a result, MSU's D, rated as the nation's best, led the Spartans to an upset win over Ohio State in the Big Ten championship game and to their first Rose Bowl appearance since 1988.

This will be the Spartans' fifth appearance in the Rose Bowl and program-record seventh-straight postseason appearance.

The Buckeyes, on the other hand, suffered their first loss of the Urban Meyer Era and were knocked out of the BCS National Championship Game. Now, Ohio State is Miami-bound instead of heading to Pasadena.

That's not exactly the consolation prize Meyer and Co. wanted, but one they'll have to deal with after losing to the Spartans, 34-24.

There are five other Big Ten teams currently getting the benefit of those extra practices due to being involved in the postseason.

Wisconsin is making its school-record 12th-straight bowl appearance and third trip to the Capital One Bowl.

After a down 2012 season, Iowa is back in the bowl picture, making its fifth bowl appearance in the last six years. The Hawkeyes will be making their fourth trip to the Outback Bowl and 27th overall appearance in a bowl game.

Michigan endured a disappointing season and has to settle for a trip to Arizona and a Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl appearance. It's the Wolverines' fourth-straight trip to a bowl game and 43rd postseason date in program history.

Nebraska is making its seventh-straight postseason appearance and 50th overall.

Meanwhile, Minnesota is going to its second-straight bowl game and 16th overall.

Following *Huskers Illustrated* looks at some of the football happenings ongoing at the other 11 Big Ten schools.

ILLINOIS

You know Coach Tim Beckman is happy to still be Illinois' head coach this holiday season.

After all, he's only guided the Illini to one Big Ten victory in his first two seasons in Champaign. Illinois athletic director Mike Thomas decided not to fire Beckman. The Illini must improve significantly on defense or Beckman will be shown the door at this time next year. The Fighting Illini didn't have much fight on the defensive side of the ball. They were 105th nationally in scoring defense (allowing 35 points per game) after being 94th a year ago (32).

INDIANA

The Hoosiers fell short of meeting their No. 1 goal this season, playing in a bowl game so Coach Kevin Wilson is spending his third-straight December on the road recruiting instead of preparing for a bowl opponent.

"We're not satisfied with 5-7," Wilson said. "We made some progress. You're not beating your chest or proud. It's not what you want. Our goal is not to be competitive. Our goal is to win. We weren't quite good enough this year."

If IU is to get to the postseason in 2014, it must get better on defense. Consider this ... in six of the Hoosiers' seven losses, they permitted 240 yards rushing. So going forward, even though IU has lost more games (41) over the last five seasons than anyone in the Big Ten, the pressure on Wilson will begin to mount. He'll begin his fourth year in '14 and now knows his Hoosiers need to be playing in December and not home for the holidays.

"It's my job to look at the whole picture and not make excuses, not point fingers, but keep pushing and win games," Wilson said.

IOWA

Like two other Big Ten teams, Iowa will have its work cut out this bowl season facing a tough team from the SEC. The Hawkeyes get a date with mighty LSU, a team that handed Auburn its only loss this season.

"At first blush, I know we will be facing a quality opponent," Hawkeye coach Kirk Fer-

LEGENDS DIVISION

2013 Standings

Team	Overall Record	Conference Record
*Michigan State	12-1	8-0
*Nebraska	8-4	5-3
*Minnesota	8-4	4-4
*Iowa	8-4	5-3
*Michigan	7-5	3-5
Northwestern	5-7	1-7

LEADERS DIVISION

2013 Standings

Team	Overall Record	Conference Record
*Ohio State	12-1	8-0
*Wisconsin	9-3	6-2
x Penn State	7-5	4-4
Indiana	5-7	3-5
Illinois	4-8	1-7
Purdue	1-11	0-8

* - Bowl Eligible

x - Ineligible for postseason

! Division Championship

Dec. 7 Results

Michigan State 34, Ohio State 24

Dec. 27

Texas Bowl

Syracuse vs. Minnesota

Dec. 28

Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl

Kansas State vs. Michigan

Jan. 1

Taxslayer.com Gator Bowl

Georgia vs. Nebraska

Outback Bowl

LSU vs. Iowa

Capital One Bowl

South Carolina vs. Wisconsin

Rose Bowl

Stanford vs. Michigan State

Jan. 3

Discover Orange Bowl

Clemson vs. Ohio State

LEGENDS **BIG** LEADERS



entz said. "I know the last time we played them, they had great talent, great personnel and were well coached and I'm certain that hasn't changed. It will be a great challenge, something for our team to latch onto."

Ferentz's team might have been catching LSU at the right time, however, when you consider the Tigers will be starting freshman quarterback Anthony Jennings, who has attempted 10 passes this season, for the first time. Jennings is replacing Zach Mettenberger, who tore his anterior cruciate ligament in the regular-season finale against Arkansas.

MICHIGAN

Senior wide receiver Jeremy Gallon, who was voted team MVP and was a second-team All-Big Ten selection, wants to have a memorable postseason and very well could. Gallon wants to end his Michigan career with a victory, but he also wants to become the school's single-season receiving leader. To do so, he needs 47 yards to set the record. When talking about Gallon, Wolverine coach Brady Hoke recently said, "He's as good as any big receiver I've been around." Hoke's main concern heading to Arizona is the health of quarterback Devin Gardner, who has "turf toe," which he suffered in the regular-season finale against Ohio State.

MICHIGAN STATE

It's been a season to remember for the Spartans, who hope to cap a very memorable season off with a Rose Bowl win. Already the month of December has been a fruitful one.

Michigan State won the Big Ten Championship game and a few days later cornerback Darqueze Dennard won the Jim Thorpe Award, given to the top defensive back in the country, becoming the first player from Michigan State to win the coveted award.

Dennard, a first-team All-American, isn't the only MSU All-American this year. Defensive end Shilique Calhoun earned second-team accolades. Dennard and Calhoun will be playing in front of plenty of Spartan fans in California. Ticket requests from Spartan fans have exceeded 31,000, far more than the school's 24,000 ticket allotment.

MINNESOTA

The job Gopher coach Jerry Kill did this season leading his team to another bowl game has been recognized. Kill was named 2013 Regional Coach of the Year Award from the American Football Coaches Association. He joins Florida State's Jimbo Fisher, Missouri's Gary Pinkel, Baylor's Art Briles and Stanford's David Shaw as the five selections from the FBS. Next month one of the aforementioned coaches will be named National Coach of the Year.

Kill got more good news since quarterback Philip Nelson has been full-go in all of the team's bowl practices since getting his bell rung in the Michigan State game.

NORTHWESTERN

Perhaps no team in the country was more of a disappointment than Northwestern, who finished 5-7 overall, including 1-7 in the Big Ten. Wildcat coach Pat Fitzgerald's faith in his program, however, isn't wavering. "We'll be back," he said. "We've earned and deserve any and all criticism that comes with not being where we belong. We will be back. I promise you that."

OHIO STATE

If the Buckeyes are still thinking about how close they came to playing for a national title, they're not acting like it.

"I think the minute the Orange Bowl selected Ohio State, the mood changed real fast in Columbus, Ohio," OSU coach Urban Meyer said. "The mood shifted real fast when we were invited to a BCS bowl game and have an opportunity to go to south Florida and play a quality opponent (Clemson). Every team in America wakes up in August and wants to go play in a BCS bowl game, and we're one of the few teams that gets to do that. So we're honored."

Buckeye quarterback Braxton Miller became just the fourth player to be named a two-time winner of the Chicago Tribune's Silver Football, awarded annually to the Big Ten MVP. Many Buckeye fans are concerned about whether the Orange Bowl will be Ryan Shazier's last game in a Buckeye uniform. The highly decorated junior still hasn't decided if he will return for his final year of eligibility or if he'll head to the NFL.

PENN STATE

Let the Bill O'Brien watch begin. After posting another winning season in Happy Valley, the Penn State coach is hot commodity in the eyes of NFL brass. O'Brien's team is not allowed to play in the postseason due to NCAA sanctions, but you can bet O'Brien will be fielding many inquiries from NFL teams about obtaining his services. The Houston Texans, who recently fired Gary Kubiak, are interested in O'Brien, according to the *Houston Chronicle*. Many believe O'Brien wants to return to the NFL. It might be tougher than those think, though, as he seems to be a perfect fit for Penn State.

PURDUE

Purdue athletic director Morgan Burke isn't discouraged about where the Boilermaker football program is even after suffering through a 1-11 season, Darrell Hazell's first season.

"We made that conscious decision to invest in football and the objective is to get back to Pasadena (Rose Bowl)," Burke told the *Lafayette Journal & Courier*. "We went out and recruited a guy (Hazell) who was in demand, who has a strong pedigree and experience of both building and maintaining success in a program."

Purdue upped its commitment to its football program, paying its head coach \$2 million per season and increasing the pool to pay assistant coaches from about \$500,000 to \$2.1 million. Now, Hazell and Co. will be expected to deliver many more Ws in West Lafayette or his days will be numbered.

WISCONSIN

Don't expect the Badgers to go against from their offensive philosophy of ground and pound when they play in their New Year's Day bowl game in a few weeks, but they may look to air it out a little more.

A big focus for Wisconsin in its bowl prep has been improving its passing game, hoping to open up more daylight for running backs Melvin Gordon and James White, a pair of 1,300-yard rushers.

"Defenses are ganging up on us more so than they have all year long," Wisconsin coach Gary Andersen said. To get rid of that is to complete some balls down the field and cause some issues."



Courtesy Photo

Former Nebraska football player Greg Hacias returned to Michigan after playing at Nebraska in the early 1970s. He is a successful businessman and also was one of the people responsible for a bowl being played in Detroit.

Hacias helps develop Detroit's Little Caesars Bowl from beginning

Greg Hacias is one of the rare few people who got to build a bowl game from scratch.

In the mid-90s, George Perles, former Michigan State head coach and Pittsburgh Steelers defensive coordinator, called him up. Perles coached Hacias in high school and knew he had connections in Detroit.

Perles wanted to start a bowl game, marketed as the premier bowl in the Midwest. He needed sponsors, and he wanted car companies.

Hacias, who played quarterback and safety at Nebraska from 1968-70, worked for General Motors straight out of college. He helped open a Saturn plant in Tennessee, then started his own company called NetLink, which, in part, acts as a supply chain solutions company heavily rooted in the automotive industry.

Hacias is the face of the company. He flies jets around the world, meeting with CEOs

and presidents of companies from here to Beijing. He's got a few phone numbers.

"Their knowledge is football, my knowledge is business," Hacias said. "... They needed a businessman with a great network to raise money for the game. That's my strength."

Perles – who Hacias refers to as "a Tom Osborne kind of creature" in Michigan – asked him to help out. "If the pope asks you to do something, by God you're going to do it," he said.

For the first five games (1997-2001), the game, called "the Motor City Bowl," was played in the Pontiac Silverdome in nearby Pontiac, Mich. Ford, General Motors and Chrysler – the "Big Three" American automakers – sponsored the game from 1998 until 2007, following the game in its move to Ford Field in Detroit in 2002.

After government bailouts for many automakers and the fallout afterwards, GM and

CATCHING UP WITH GREG HACIAS

BY CHRIS PETERS

Chrysler pulled their sponsorship.

"When Mr. Obama roughed up the automotive companies a few years ago, they bailed on the bowl game," Hacias said.

He again leaned on his connections.

A friend, Mike Ilitch, owns Little Caesars Pizza (plus the Detroit Red Wings and the Detroit Tigers). In 2009, the company took over the naming rights for the bowl, with Ford still as a co-sponsor.

Currently, the bowl gets the eighth selection from the Big Ten Conference and the first selection from the Mid-American Conference. When the MAC doesn't put a team in the BCS and when the Big Ten fields eight bowl-eligible teams (a rarity), the bowl gets an enticing regional matchup.

When that isn't the case, it still gets the first choice from the MAC leftovers and usually ends up with a pretty close MAC vs. At Large showdown. Each of the last six games have been decided by 5 points or fewer.

This year's matchup pits Pittsburgh with MAC champion Bowling Green, who upset unbeaten Northern Illinois in the MAC title game.

Outside of his involvement with the bowl, Hacias is still a rabid college football fan. Since Nebraska moved to the Big Ten in 2011, he's been able to travel from his Michigan home to at least two games each year.

When Nebraska traveled to Ann Arbor, Mich., this

fall, defeating the Wolverines, Hacias scored sideline passes from former Michigan coach Lloyd Carr. As Husker I-back Ameer Abdullah dove into the end zone for the game-winning touchdown, Hacias and his son stood at the pylon, inches away.

"We could have caught him if we wanted to," Hacias said.

Coming out of high school, Hacias was an All-American caliber recruit. At Nebraska, he served a bit of a different role. He lined up against wing back Johnny Rodgers in practice as a safety. He took hits from the NU record-holder and helped build up his self-esteem, he said.

"I like to tell people that I'm the reason Johnny Rodgers won the Heisman," he said. "He beat me up so much every day, I think I boosted his ego."

For years, Hacias used to bump into Rodgers at the Hula Bowl game in Hawaii. Hacias wasn't afraid to tell him how he felt.

"Just give me one limb off the statue," Hacias asked him. "Give me one arm."

Rodgers just laughed.

Hacias has his own relic from his playing days – his 1970 National Championship ring. He wears it from time to time. His kids joke that they'll fight over it when their old man croaks.

Maybe they'll share it. Or maybe one will buy the others out. Perhaps they'll cut it into three.

When, one day, he's lowered into the ground, Hacias may have found a solution.

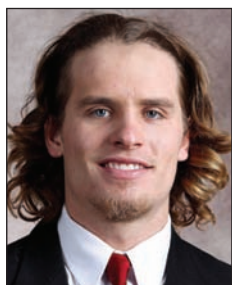
"I might take it with me."



NORTHWEST ALLIANCE

399 miles

Peltz becomes fan favorite with hustle, energy



MIKE PELTZ WANTS TO SAY HE WAS THERE AT THE BEGINNING, THERE LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR BASKETBALL SUCCESS AT NEBRASKA. IT'S BEEN A LONG ROAD FOR GETTING TO THIS POINT FOR THE SENIOR FROM ALLIANCE, NEB.,

BUT IF THE HUSKERS GO ON TO DO GREAT THINGS UNDER COACH TIM MILES, IT WILL ALL BE WORTH IT. KNOWN AS A SPARK PLUG, PELTZ SAID IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO HIM TO SEE HIS EFFORTS TURN INTO AN ENERGIZED FAN BASE AND SOME ON COURT SUCCESS.

"That would mean a ton, just for future players and for years to come, especially with coach Miles and this new arena," Peltz said. "I definitely feel that's a great opportunity. That means a lot to me because that's been my role since I've been here, whether it's practice or to games, is to bring energy."

Peltz grew up far from the capitol city and home of the Huskers.

In Alliance, basketball wasn't followed by the locals. It was all football around town back then, but things are changing, according to Peltz.

"I would say (it wasn't followed) at all, really," he said. "My dad and my brother and I followed it, but now with coach Miles and the energy he's brought, it's nationwide, statewide for sure. There's a lot more attention back home."

That's the idea, according to Peltz. Do what you can day in and day out and try to make some noise.

The guard has his sights set on the NCAA Tournament.

"To see the program get to that level would be very cool," he said. "Everywhere these coaches

have been they've had success, and they've taken their team to the national tournament. That's the goal here is to get into the national tournament and win. I think that'd been the coolest thing ever to get Nebraska basketball on that map."

This is Peltz's second and final season with the Huskers. Out of high school, he headed for Western Nebraska Community College in Scottsbluff, Neb., to sharpen up for Division I.

"I had 10 or 11 Division II offers, but I always wanted to play Division I, so I thought going JUCO in western Nebraska was my best choice just to boost my stock," he said.

Two years there left Peltz a better player and a candidate to reach his goal of playing D-I.

Although he was in talks with Liberty and Wofford that year, he never got that elusive offer he so desperately wanted.

But that's where Nebraska stepped in. When Miles got the job at Peltz's home state school, the guard knew where he would end up.

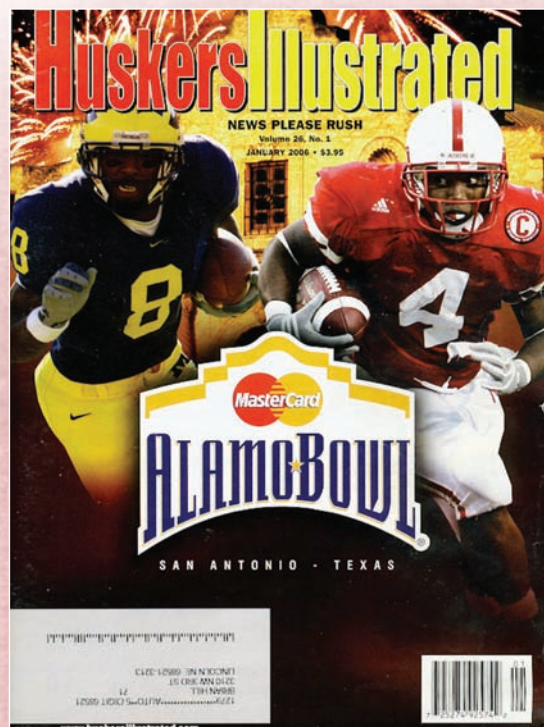
"Kind of talking with coach Miles at Colorado State, we worked something out at the last minute," Peltz said. "I knew him from Colorado State because we had kept in contact."

In less than two seasons as a Husker, Peltz is already a fan favorite in Lincoln. His all-out style of play, hustle and energy work him into fan's hearts. He hasn't always been healthy - a knee surgery cut his season short a year ago, and he still isn't fully recovered - but Peltz wouldn't trade this experience for anything.

"I still can't even jump off my left leg, so I'm just trying to make it through the best I can," Peltz said. "But it was always kind of in my mind that I wanted to play here if possible, and in the end it all kind of worked out. I'm happy about that."

~ Story by Lanny Holstein





Dec. 15, 1962

The Huskers win their first bowl game, a 36-34 win in front of only 6,166 fans in Yankee Stadium for the Gotham Bowl. In the game, Willie Ross returns a kickoff 92 yards for a touchdown, a mark that still stands as an NU bowl record. Miami mounts a comeback, but Nebraska tackle Bob Brown intercepts a Hurricane pass in the final minute to clinch the win.

Dec. 20, 1969

Nebraska defeats Georgia handily, 45-6, to win the Sun Bowl, kickstarting the team's run of 33-consecutive nine-win seasons and 35-straight bowl bids.

Dec. 28, 2005

The unranked Huskers (pictured above left) take on No. 20 Michigan in the Alamo Bowl. Nebraska puts itself in position to win the game, save for a miracle play by Michigan. But after a short pass and countless laterals, Michigan has a chance. A Wolverine player nearly touches turf, and the Huskers rush the field, thinking they had won. Instead, he gets back up, completes another lateral – the eighth of the play – and the player streaks down the sideline. A Husker tackles him out of bounds at the NU 15, ending the game and the shot at a Michigan miracle.

Dec. 30, 2000

I-back Dan Alexander (pictured below left) rushes for 240 yards against Northwestern in the Alamo Bowl, setting a NU bowl record. The Huskers would go on to defeat the No. 18 Wildcats 66-17 to finish the season 10-2 with a No. 8 AP ranking.

Jan. 1, 1941

The No. 7 Huskers play in their first bowl game, falling 21-13 at the hands of No. 2 Stanford in the Rose Bowl, playing in front of a then-Husker record crowd of 92,000.

Jan. 1, 1971

On New Year's Day, Nebraska football cements its first foot in history toward a new era of relevance. A loss by Texas earlier in the day in the Cotton Bowl meant an Orange Bowl win would give the team its first national championship. Trailing in the fourth quarter, quarterback Jerry Tagge reaches across the goal line on a quarterback sneak midway through the quarter, taking a 17-12 lead over LSU. The stout Blackshirts defense would hold, sealing the win.

Jan. 1, 1972

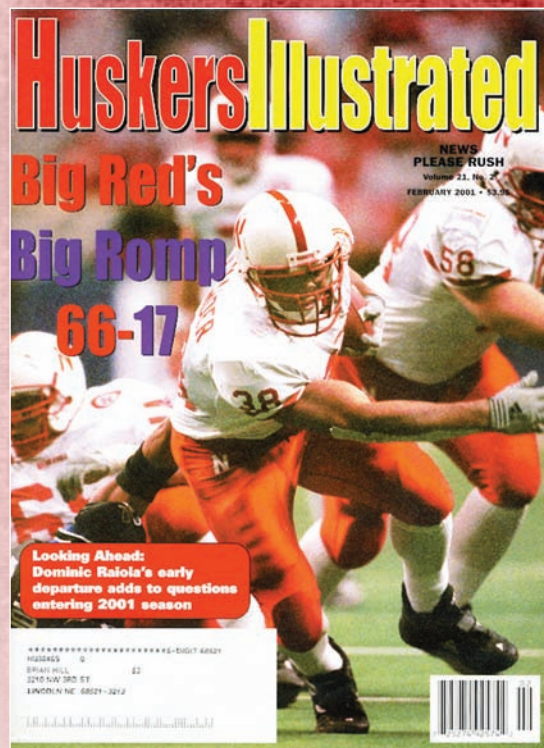
Johnny Rodgers sets an NU bowl game record with a 77-yard punt return for touchdown against the Crimson Tide as the Huskers seek a second-straight national championship. Rodgers' return gave the Huskers a 14-0 lead at the end of the first quarter of the Orange Bowl, giving Nebraska momentum en route to a 38-6 shellacking of No. 2 Alabama.

Jan. 1, 1973

Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Rodgers backs up his Heisman win with a tremendous performance in a 40-6 win over No. 12 Notre Dame. Rodgers accounted for five of Nebraska's six scores, running for three touchdowns, catching one 50-yard score and throwing for a 52-yard TD to Frosty Anderson.

Jan. 1, 1974

Nebraska Sports Information Director Don Bryant discovers a drawing of a cartoon character nicknamed "Herbie Husker," drawn by Lubbock, Texas, artist Dirk West. The two form a relationship and West draws a refined sketch, creating Ne-



braska's first official mascot. Bryant said that to this date, he has kept the drawing. It still resides in his desk at Memorial Stadium.

Jan. 1, 1994

Undefeated Nebraska (pictured bottom right) entered an Orange Bowl rematch as 17 ½ point underdogs to one-loss Florida State. The Huskers kept the game close, and found themselves battling for a win as time dwindled away.

Quarterback Tommie Frazier threw a 29-yard strike to tight end Trumane Bell as the clock struck zero, with Bell down at the FSU 28-yard line. Florida State fans went ballistic and players drenched coach Bobby Bowden in Gatorade.

Then referees put one second back on the clock. Husker kicker Byron Bennett trotted onto the field for a 45-yard kick and Tom Osborne's first national championship. But the kick sailed left, and FSU stormed the field.

Jan. 1, 1995

The Huskers (pictured on cover above right) head to the Orange Bowl for the fourth-straight year on a mission. Nebraska squared off with Miami on its home field, seeking a national championship. In the fourth quarter, the Huskers trailed by 8, when fullback Cory Schlesinger took a handoff on a trap play 15 yards for the tying TD. The Blackshirts held Miami on a three-and-out, then scored six plays later on the exact same trap play to Schlesinger. A late interception sealed Tom Osborne's first title.

Jan. 2, 1984

The undefeated Nebraska Cornhuskers, averaging 52 points per game, entered the game having been ranked No. 1 all season long. The Huskers were playing for a national title, with Howard Schnellenberger-coached Miami in the way in Miami's Orange Bowl. Difficulties on defense and special teams kept the game close. After a 19-yard TD run by All-American guard Dean Steinkuhler on a fumblerooski got the Huskers on the board, they fought back to be in position with less than one minute remaining to tie the game with an extra point or win it with a 2-point conversion. Coach Tom Osborne went for the win. But as QB Turner Gill's pass was tipped by a Miami defender, the national title slipped away.

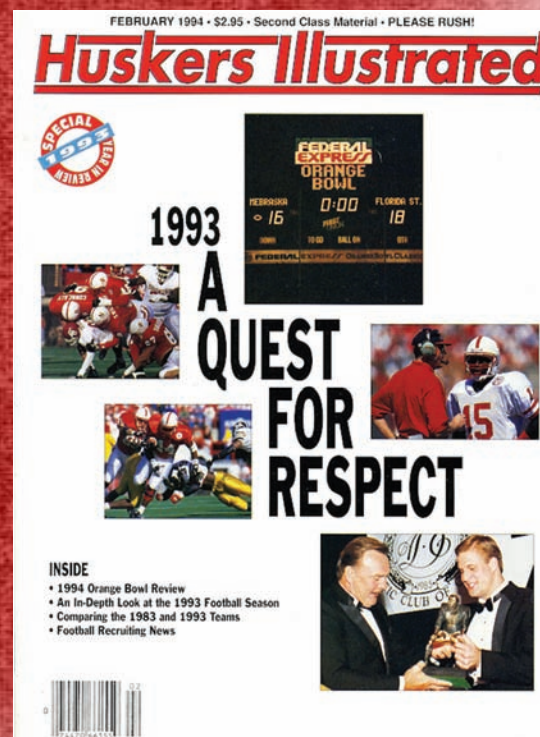
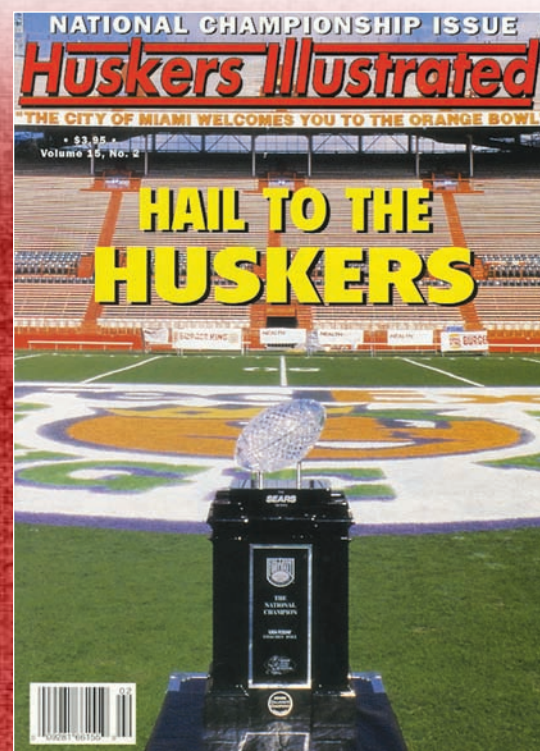
Jan. 2, 1996

With a second-consecutive national title in sight, the No. 1 Cornhuskers roll over Florida in the Fiesta Bowl, winning 62-21. QB Tommie Frazier cements his legacy in college football with 199 rushing yards, including a 75-yard touchdown run on an option keeper, where he broke seven tackles in a play widely regarded as one of the best runs in college football history.

Jan. 2, 1998

After announcing his retirement, coach Tom Osborne gets sent out on top, winning his third national championship. Husker I-back Ahman Green rushes for an Orange Bowl-record 206 yards, helping the Huskers demolish QB Peyton Manning and the No. 3 Tennessee Volunteers. The Associated Press names Michigan its national champions, but the coaches poll hands a trophy to Nebraska.

Jan. 6, 1962 – Nebraska announces its intentions to hire Wyoming coach Robert “Bob” Devaney. Though no formal contract is signed, due to his remaining 5-year contract in Laramie, Wyo., the two sides agree to form a relationship. Shortly thereafter, Wyoming would release the coach of his contract, setting the stage for one of the brightest coaching careers in college football history.



Nelson epitomizes greatest fans

By Chris Peters

Huskers Illustrated

Not many Nebraskans can recall seeing Bernie Masterson coach a football game. Even fewer remember the name George “Pot-sy” Clark, who coached the 1948 team to a 2-8 record.

Almost none of the living population has seen Sam Francis run for a touchdown. There are no videos on YouTube of the Cornhuskers star, even though he nearly won a Heisman Trophy in 1936. The first college football game wouldn’t be broadcast for another three years.

Warren Nelson has attended more Nebraska football games than Herbie Husker. He’s owned season tickets since 1947 and attended games long before that as a 16-year old sitting in the knothole section.

Since returning from World War II and buying a pair of tickets, he has filled at least one of his two seats with his derriere every single game.

“There’s nobody close to me,” he said. “I’m 90 years old and still going.”

This year, he watched his first ever home game from the couch. He had to have a pace-maker installed to keep his heart healthy, a surgery that ended his season and his streak at 66 ½ years.

No, his heart didn’t stop after witnessing Ron Kellogg’s Hail Mary win over Northwestern. He fell in the bathroom, cracked his chin on the sink, and couldn’t get up.

Doctors found irregularity with his heart, some 30 years after a quadruple bypass surgery.

As their dad sat, recovering from surgery, his three sons spread the word – their dad is the greatest fan in the Nebraska football kingdom. In a team that calls its fans the “greatest fans in college football,” he was the most devout servant.

“As far as he was concerned, it was like he made a commitment (to go to every game),” his son Warren said.

His seats, which have been the same since the 1960s, sit right near the south 40-yard line in east stadium, as close as you can get to the field without getting wet during a rainstorm, thanks to the overhang. He hasn’t moved over even one spot since relocating from the cinderblocks in west stadium during the Bill Jennings era.

When athletic director Shawn Eichorst found out about Nelson, he personally wrote



Warren Nelson Jr. (left) and his father, Warren Nelson, Sr. have been longstanding Husker attendees.

him a card and sent it along with a Nebraska hat. Coach Bo Pelini signed and sent a football to Nelson.

Even Michigan State contacted Nelson. When they found out the first game he would be missing in nearly three-quarters of a century would be against the Spartans, the MSU athletic director sent him a card and a Spartans pullover jacket.

The news of his unimaginable streak spread across the state when TV stations came to talk to him. Soon, gas station attendants were calling him their “celebrity.” A restaurant down the street in his hometown of Bellevue, Neb., gave him a free tenderloin sandwich and side of onion rings – or maybe it was fries, he can’t quite recall.

“I’ve had just so many compliments that you can’t believe,” Nelson said.

But no amount of support could put his keister in the stadium. His ritual of entering the stadium as early as possible, watching for injuries as players warmed up and chewing on a hot dog and popcorn, washed down with a diet pop, would have to be placed on hold until next season.

The two games he missed were losses. Perhaps there was a bit of an imbalance in the volume coming from east stadium.

Win or lose, he’s proven he’ll stick around. Even in his early days going to games, like the time his boss tried literally giving his tickets

away for free but couldn’t find a suitor, Nelson has found a way to enjoy the game.

“I just love the football. That was my big deal,” Nelson said.

He has watched games in torrential rainstorms, in the scorching sun and in frostbitten conditions. Nothing, except his heart, can keep him out of the stadium.

He’s the guy who takes the detour, miles out of the way down Highway 6, to make sure he doesn’t get stuck behind an accident on Interstate 80.

He’s not once missed a kickoff, even on away games. Trips to Missouri, Kansas, Kansas State, Iowa State and the whole list of usual suspects were fun, but could never compare to home.

As he sat and watched the Huskers face Michigan State, his first game watching Memorial Stadium from a distance, things just didn’t feel right.

“I missed it, I’ll tell you,” Nelson said.

After the TV showed the Hawkeyes finishing off the Huskers in the Heroes Game, he went and saw his doctor. The pacemaker has taken well to his body. It’s running perfectly, he says.

Barring any setback, he and his son should be back in the stadium on Aug. 30, when Florida Atlantic comes to Lincoln to kick off the 2014 season.

Then, he’ll start a new streak.

HUSKERS IN THE

DeJon Gomes • Safety • Detroit Lions

STORY BY CHRIS PETERS

For every hero, there's normally a villain. Unfortunately for former-Husker safety DeJon Gomes, the most famous play of his NFL career featured him in the latter role. On Christmas Eve 2011, Gomes' rookie year with the Redskins, he lined up for his fourth career start, against the Minnesota Vikings. His primary goal was to contain All-Pro running back Adrian Peterson.

Peterson took a handoff early in the third quarter, with the Vikings leading. Gomes darted into the backfield.

The stampeding back ran toward Gomes, planted his feet and prepared to cut toward the sideline.

Gomes dove low, the way safeties are taught to take down future Hall of Famers like Peterson.

Instead of making contact at Peterson's thigh, Gomes' helmet smashed Peterson's left knee, bending it inward.

Trainers rushed out. The scrawny men lifted Peterson by his armpits and carried him to the cart.

Some blamed Gomes. They called the hit dirty. They called him a dirty player. Some threatened his life.

He had to stay off Facebook and Twitter. The whole Internet, really.

"Fans don't really see it how we see it," he said. "They thought it was dirty."

"In the moment, I just thought I made a good play and tackle for loss on a good back."

Gomes knew Peterson was hurt, but he didn't know how badly. An MRI later that week showed a torn ACL and MCL – career-jeopardizing types of injuries.

In the year that followed, Peterson built the knee back up and returned by the start of the 2012 season. He ran like a stray dog from animal control, falling just a few yards shy of an NFL record. He won the MVP and nearly the Comeback Player of the Year, if it weren't for Peyton Manning's return from neck surgery.

Gomes, meanwhile, was fighting for his life on an NFL roster. He went from being the starting safety at the start of the season to riding the bench after three games. In the sixth game, the Vikings came to town.

This time, Gomes' Redskins earned a win. After the game, he found Peterson.

"We talked a bit after the game," Gomes said. "Nothing too extensive, just to know there was nothing behind it."

Gomes never started another game for the Redskins. He played in relief at safety, working mostly on special teams.

In August 2013, after the team's preseason games and full playbook installation, the Redskins cut Gomes.

"That was kind of devastating," Gomes said.

One day later, the Detroit Lions claimed him off waivers. But he had no time to learn the playbook. The team wanted him on



DeJon Gomes keys in on the Chicago Bears during a game earlier this season.

the field for the first regular season game in seven days.

Coaches wouldn't sit down one-on-one and get him up to speed. He had to rely on his fellow defensive backs.

If a starter were to pull a hamstring or get a concussion, he could be the next guy in, whether he knew the playbook or not.

While that hasn't happened yet this season, Gomes has appeared in every game. He works from the slot on punt return and is a safety on kickoffs.

He has to play Peterson twice a year now.

Even though he knows it was a clean tackle, Gomes will never forget his role in Peterson's injury. It's something he can learn from.

He prefers to hang on to the memories where he played the hero – like his 14 tackles against the Cowboys in his first career start, or the game-clinching interception he had on All-Pro quarterback Drew Brees.

Although his 2013 season has been tough – changing teams in the preseason eliminated any realistic shot for him to make a noteworthy impact – he's optimistic that he'll get the chance to be the hero again once he has an offseason to master the playbook.

"I'm just waiting for my next opportunity," he said.

Former NU Player, Position, Team

Prince Amukamara, CB, N.Y. Giants

Zack Bowman, CB, Chicago

Stewart Bradley, LB, Denver (IR)

Josh Brown, PK, New York Giants

Rex Burkhead, RB, Cincinnati

Adam Carriker, DE, Washington

Will Compton, LB, Washington (Practice)

Jared Crick, DE, Houston

Lavonte David, LB, Tampa Bay

Alfonzo Dennard, CB, New England

DeJon Gomes, S, Detroit

Roy Helu Jr., RB, Washington

Alex Henery, PK, Philadelphia

Ricky Henry, OL, Kansas City (IR)

Richie Incognito, OL, Miami

Marcel Jones, OL, New Orleans

(Practice)

Sam Koch, P, Baltimore

Eric Martin, LB, Cleveland

Mike McNeill, TE, St. Louis

Carl Nicks, OG, Tampa Bay

Niles Paul, TE, Washington

Dominic Raiola, C, Detroit

Matt Slauson, OG, Chicago

Daimion Stafford, S, Tennessee

Ndamukong Suh, DT, Detroit

WRESTLING

James Green won the 157-pound title at the Cliff Keen Las Vegas Invitational to lead the No. 10 Huskers to a second-place finish this past Saturday. Nebraska scored 130.5 points, finishing 24 points behind Oklahoma.

In the finals, Green outlasted No. 12 Brian Realbuto of Cornell, 6-5, to capture the title. Green, who is the No. 4 wrestler in the country, improved to 13-0 on the season. Anthony Abidin (141), Jake Sueflohn (149), Robert Kokesch (174) and TJ Dudley (184) each advanced to the finals in their respective weight classes but lost in their championship bouts.

Abidin earned a medical forfeit win over Virginia Tech's Devin Carter in the semifinals before losing to No. 1 Logan Stieber of Ohio State by a 16-1 technical fall. Sueflohn managed a 7-6 win over No. 7 Eric Grajales of Michigan, but fell by an 8-3 margin to No. 5 Kendrick Maple of Oklahoma in the finals.

Kokesch won a 6-0 decision over No. 11 Stephen Doty of Virginia in the semifinals, but lost a 3-2 decision to No. 1 Andrew Howe of Oklahoma. It was Kokesch's first loss of the season after a 14-0 start.

Dudley defeated No. 18 Benjamin Stroth of Wyoming in the semifinals, 18-9, before losing a 13-3 major decision to No. 12 Gabriel Dean of Cornell in the finals.

The Huskers are back in Nevada in two weeks at the Reno Tournament of Champions on Dec. 22 for their next action.

TRACK & FIELD

The Nebraska track and field team competed in the



NU women's soccer coach John Walker was named the Regional and Big Ten Coach of the Year.

annual intrasquad meet on Saturday at the Devaney Center Indoor Track. The Red team earned the narrow victory over the White team by a slight 137.5-136.5 margin. During competition, both teams took down four meet records.

Freshman Kadeica Baird made an impressive debut her Husker debut posting a new meet record time of 23.85 in the 200-meter dash. Junior Chantal Duncan smashed an intrasquad mark with a 1:32.74 performance in the 600-meter competition as part of the victorious Red squad.

On the men's side senior Dexter McKenzie started off his final year with the Scarlet and Cream by notching a meet record in the 200-meter dash. McKenzie stopped the clock in 21.16 to break a six-year old intrasquad meet record held by Scott Wims.

The final record of the day was taken down the last event of the meet; the men's 4x400-meter relay.

The NU women had numerous freshman shine in their first meets with NU. Anna Peer made an impressive showing in her first race in the Scarlet and Cream recording a top finish in the 3,200-meter run clocking in at 10:51.80. Fellow freshman Melissa-Maree Farrington earned first place in the 60-meter hurdles with a time of 8.78 in

the finals, while Tierra Williams won the long jump with a leap of 19-1.

For the Nebraska men, sophomore Dapo Akinmoladun earned a victory for the White team with a 7.84 mark in the 60-meter hurdles, while senior Trevor Vidlak won the 3,200-meter run crossing the line in 8:54.33. Freshman Chris Daniels picked up the weight throw title in his first collegiate meet with a toss of 62-4.5 while junior Devandrew Johnson defeated his teammates in the triple jump by more than four feet.

The Huskers will now continue to prepare for the start of the 2014 track and field season, as they are set to open at home on Friday, Jan. 17 with the two-day Holiday Inn Invitational.

SWIMMING & DIVING

Taryn Collura won the 100-yard freestyle in a season-best time, Nicole Schwery took home second place in the platform dive and the Huskers held off Iowa for third place at the Hawkeye Invitational on Sunday afternoon. Nebraska finished the meet with a total of 462, outscoring the Hawkeyes by 26 points. Notre Dame took home the title followed by second-place Boise State.

Overall, Nebraska earned eight top-five finishes, including

victories from Collura (100 free) and Anna Filipcic (three-meter dive). Collura added a third-place finish in the 50-yard freestyle, while Schwery gave the Huskers their second top-two finish in the diving events on Sunday.

The Huskers now have a week to prepare for two road duals that will close out fall competition for the squad. First, the Huskers will travel to Cedar Falls, Iowa, to take on Northern Iowa Friday. Then they travel to Omaha the next day to face UNO.

SOCCER

The Nebraska soccer team wound up at No. 13 in the final National Soccer Coaches Association of America/Continental Tire Women's Division I poll. The mark equaled Nebraska's highest end-of-season ranking since 2002.

NU boasted the fifth-best win total in all of Division I this season and made its 11th NCAA Tournament appearance before falling in the second round to end the nation's longest win streak at 10 matches.

Coach John Walker earned some recognition for leading the team. He was named the 2013 National Soccer Coaches Association of America Great Lakes Regional Women's Coach of the Year.

"John is the heart and soul of this program," senior midfielder Jordan Jackson said. "He has so much passion and knowledge for the game, it makes us all excited to train every-day and get better."

Walker, who was also tabbed Big Ten Coach of the Year, guided the Huskers to a 19-4-1 record, its highest win total since 2000, and their first NCAA birth since 2005.

Four Husker players also appeared on the NSCAA All-Great Lakes Region team. Seniors Emma Stevens and Ari Romero earned first team honors, while fellow senior Jordan Jackson and freshman Jaycie Johnson claimed second team designation.

Coaches Corner

with Darin Erstad
Head Baseball Coach



Huskers Illustrated reporter Lanny Holstein recently visited with Nebraska baseball coach Darin Erstad, who is in his third season, to talk about his team and a range of topics from recruiting to strength of schedule.

HI: Is it tough to determine which kids are more likely to go pro straight out of high school than others?

DE: Well, considering we are the only sport that has a draft out of high school, it's different, but every school in the country deals with the same set of circumstances. There's one way you can eliminate that is you can not recruit good players, but that's not going to happen. It's part of the deal. You communicate with everybody, protect yourself a little bit, and just go from there."

HI: When you say "protect yourself," what do you mean by that?

DE: You continue to find backup plans, in case someone signs. You continue to build relationships with people, continue looking for what's out there. There might be a guy out there that could be drafted and signed, but you sure don't stop recruiting him, and you don't stop recruiting across the country, finding guys that might be available after the draft. It never stops.

HI: Have you ever come across a kid that you like, but you don't feel like he's worth pursuing because you know he's going to sign with someone straight out of high school?

DE: We haven't had that situation yet. Over time it could happen, but kids that really take academics seriously, you have a good fighting chance with them. They have good, well-rounded families that understand the value of an education. You have a fighting chance with those guys."

HI: What do you like about this latest recruiting class?

DE: They're versatile. We have guys that can do many different things. They can play infield, outfield. We've got some guys that can pitch and play positions. I like the mentality of the group. Just talking to their coaches and their family members, scouts, getting a gage for what type of personality they have, it's the type of personality that's going to be a successful kid in life, no matter whether that's in pro ball or graduating and being successful in a job in another profession.

HI: Do you regret scheduling so tough a season ago after falling one win short of making a regional?

DE: No. The only thing I regret is that I didn't do a good enough job coaching in some of the games we should have won and not helping them get over that hump to believe and be mentally tough enough in those situations to win a few more games. That's how fine of a line it was, and I think our guys understand that. That's on me to get us ready."

This Week



Husker Athletics

Saturday, Dec. 21

Women's Basketball

South Dakota at Pinnacle Bank Arena 2:30 p.m.

Men's Basketball

The Citadel at Pinnacle Bank Arena 7:30 p.m.

Volleyball

NCAA Volleyball Final at Seattle TBA

Sunday, Dec. 22

Wrestling

Reno Tournament of Champions at Reno, Nev. 11 a.m.

Saturday, Dec. 28

Men's Basketball

Cincinnati at Cincinnati, Ohio 11:00 a.m.

Sunday, Dec. 29

Women's Basketball

Oral Roberts at Pinnacle Bank Arena 2 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 31

Men's Basketball

Iowa at Iowa City, Ia. at 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 1

Football

Georgia in Gator Bowl in Jacksonville, Fla. 11 a.m.

Thursday, Jan. 2

Women's Basketball

Northwestern at Pinnacle Bank Arena at 8 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 3

Wrestling

Wyoming at Devaney Center 7 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 4

Swimming

Holiday Training Competition TBA

Men's Basketball

Ohio State at Columbus, Ohio at 11 a.m.

Thursday, Jan. 9

Women's Basketball

Michigan State at East Lansing, Mich. at 6 p.m.

Men's Basketball

Michigan at Pinnacle Bank Arena 8 p.m.

Formula for Success

**Gary Pepin
has found a
winning
strategy
when it
comes to
recruiting
and
developing
a dominant
track and
field
program**



Gary Pepin works with Charles Lawrence and Rhonda Blanchford back in one of his first few seasons at NU in 1983.

HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED FILE PHOTO

By Lanny Holstein

Huskers Illustrated

Nebraska track and field coach Gary Pepin enters his 34th season this January, when the Huskers open competition.

As the winningest coach in the history of both the Big Eight and Big 12 conferences, he's been around the block a few times and knows what it takes to put together a winning team.

That's why he was so keen to bulk up his roster on the women's side this past recruiting cycle.

"I thought it was the class that was needed because last year we probably had the poorest year on the women's side that we've ever had since I've been here," Pepin said. "We needed to have a strong recruiting year."

Pepin and staff did just that. At last check, the track and field News ranked the women's class No. 10 nationally. Those athletes

will bolster a returning roster that was decimated by injuries a season ago – the main reason they struggled, according to Pepin.

"I think at one point we may have had seven people that would have been on our conference team that were out, maybe more than that," the coach said.

Pepin addressed the need and said he's confident in the bunch he'll run out there this season. He also feels like Nebraska can exploit a few weaknesses in the conference this season because of the way it's recruited.

"One of the things we have to do is not only look at our own team, but look at where we can score points in the conference," Pepin said. "For example, if you had three or four great high jumpers in the conference already coming back, well, that may not be an event that you are particularly interested in recruiting unless you could get somebody better than all of those people."

As is true of all Nebraska sports, Track and Field is fighting against the state's small population base when it comes to recruiting, and Pepin's found ways to beat the odds there.

He still prefers local kids, but he's willing to go out of state, or even out of country, to find athletes with a high baseline.

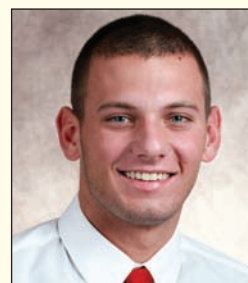
"If you are going to expect someone to make an immediate impact and you are going to invest big money in those people, then you better be pretty doggone sure that they're going to get the job done for you," Pepin said. "The better they are coming out of high school or junior college, the odds are with you that they aren't going to get any worse. They may or may not get better, and you hope they get better, but if they are good enough to begin with, at least the odds are with you that they are going to perform right off the bat."

Nebraska doesn't have time to wait and see on its top prospects once they make it to campus in part because the NCAA doesn't allot many track and field scholarships. In fact, on the men's side, the ratio of scholarships to starters is the worst in college sports. There are only 12.5 scholarships to cover 21 outdoor, indoor and cross country events, so the Huskers have to make each one count.

"If you start rolling the dice with people that aren't highly ranked or anything, then you are really rolling the dice that with our great coaching, we are going to take them to wherever," Pepin said. "Well, that doesn't happen very often."

10 questions

with Kyle Kubat
Junior Baseball Player



1 Where do you hang out in Lincoln?
KK: You could find me at Chipotle, every other night or so. I started going to some restaurants in the new Haymarket area too. I went to Hiro 88 the other day for some sushi, and it's pretty good. Now, being 21 (on Dec. 4), I'll be out downtown more. Don't be afraid to say 'hi.'

3 What are you going to do to celebrate your 21st birthday?
KK: We have 7 am practice, so I have to go to bed. I'll probably just hang out with my roommates. Miami is in town, so I'll probably watch the basketball game. We have ESPN at the apartment, thank goodness.

4 What are your thoughts on Christmas music?
KK: "I don't like that people start listening to it November 1st. For me, it's Thanksgiving, my birthday, and then Christmas music. I kind of do it in order. Whenever I walk into a store, and it's early to mid November, and they are playing Jingle Bells, I'm kind of getting upset. I think Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays, and it's based off family and being Thankful for what you have. All of a sudden Black Friday comes, and it's like 'lets go get everything we don't have.' There's a little bit of irony there."

5 So what kind of year-round tunes do you have on your iPod?
KK: Wow. I have a lot of genres. I have bits and pieces of country, a little bit of hip-hop, R&B. My favorite artists are Time Flies Tuesday and Chris Brown.

7 I know you're a big college football fan. Who do you have for the Heisman right now?
KK: Ameer Abdullah because he's a Husker, but I think (Jameis) Winston will get it. I do want to mention this: I don't know why they don't look more at A.J. McCarron. What's his record at Alabama, 35-3? Yeah, he doesn't put up the flashy numbers, but he does what he has to do for his team to win.

8 Will we see anything new from you next season?
KK: Just getting stronger, trying to throw harder. I throw mid to upper 80s, but you don't need velocity if you move it around. Changeup, curveball, fastball, in and out. You see the best pitchers like Greg Maddux, what did he throw? Mid 80s? He's one of the best pitchers of all time.

9 What's the team going to be like next season? Give us the breakdown.
KK: I believe we have a good solid core coming back, good senior leadership. We should have a good freshman class and good junior college transfers that mesh well with the older guys. I think our bullpen will be solid this year. We are grooming a lot of freshman pitchers, and I think our hitting is going to compete with everyone we play.

2 What are you asking for this year for Christmas?

KK: I think I'm going to ask for a Netflix account. I always love movies or as Dane Cook calls them 'cinematic adventures.' I've always kind of taken my friends' accounts and watched them on there, but sometimes they change the passwords and don't tell me, so I have to get my own.

6 What's the last movie you've seen?
KK: I recently just watched

Home Alone. It's more of a Christmas favorite movie. I always watched it with my mom as a kid when Christmas was coming and I wanted a good laugh.

10 Who's the toughest Nebraska hitter to face in practice?

KK: I would have to say Mike Pritchard, just because you can make a really good pitch, and he'll somehow spoil it off, and as a pitcher, you just get pissed because you feel like you made the best pitch you can, and he'll spoil it.

~As interviewed by Huskers Illustrated's Lanny Holstein

Men's Basketball

2013-14 Men's Basketball Schedule

Nov. 4, 2013	UNK (exhibition)	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 91-60
Nov. 8, 2013	Florida Gulf Coast	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 77-59 1-0
Nov. 12, 2013	Western Illinois	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 62-47, 2-0
Nov. 17, 2013	S.C. State	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 83-57, 3-0
Nov. 21, 2013	UMASS	Charleston, S.C.	L, 96-90, 3-1
Nov. 22, 2013	UAB	Charleston, S.C.	L, 87-74, 3-2
Nov. 24, 2013	Georgia	Charleston, S.C.	W, 73-65 4-2
Nov. 30, 2013	Northern Illinois	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 63-58 5-2
Dec. 4, 2013	Miami	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 60-49 6-2
Dec. 8, 2013	Creighton	Omaha, Neb.	L, 82-67 6-3
Dec. 14, 2013	Arkansas State	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 79-67 7-3
Dec. 21, 2013	The Citadel	Lincoln (PBA)	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 28, 2013	Cincinnati	Cincinnati, Ohio	11 a.m. (ESPN2)
Dec. 31, 2013	Iowa	Iowa City, Ia.	6 p.m.
Jan. 4, 2013	Ohio State	Columbus, Ohio	11 a.m.
Jan. 9, 2013	Michigan	Lincoln (PBA)	8 p.m. (ESPN2)
Jan. 12, 2013	Purdue	West Lafayette, Ind.	11 a.m./3:30
Jan. 20, 2013	Ohio State	Lincoln (PBA)	6 p.m.
Jan. 23, 2013	Penn State	University Park, Pa.	7 p.m. (ESPNU)
Jan. 26, 2013	Minnesota	Lincoln (PBA)	5 p.m.
Jan. 30, 2013	Indiana	Lincoln (PBA)	7:15 p.m.
Feb. 5, 2013	Michigan	Ann Arbor, Mich.	5:30 p.m.
Feb. 8, 2013	Northwestern	Evanston, Ill.	Noon (ESPN2)
Feb. 12, 2013	Illinois	Lincoln (PBA)	7 p.m.
Feb. 16, 2013	Michigan State	East Lansing, Mich.	2 p.m.
Feb. 20, 2013	Penn State	Lincoln (PBA)	6 p.m. (ESPNU)
Feb. 23, 2013	Purdue	Lincoln (PBA)	11 a.m./3 p.m.
Feb. 26, 2013	Illinois	Champaign, Ill.	8 p.m.
March 1, 2013	Northwestern	Lincoln (PBA)	4 p.m. (ESPNU)
March 5, 2013	Indiana	Bloomington, Ind.	6 p.m.
March 9, 2013	Wisconsin	Lincoln (PBA)	4:15 or 6:30 p.m.
March 13, 2013	Big Ten Tourney	Indianapolis, Ind.	TBA



HEATED RIVALRY

Nebraska's Terran Petteway and Creighton's Gary Gibbs tussel during the Bluejay's 82-67 victory over the Huskers. Both players were ejected for the altercation.

Women's Basketball



2013-14 Women's Basketball Schedule

Oct 27, 2013	Pitt State (exh.)	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 98-47
Nov. 3, 2013	UNK (exhibition)	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 75-34
Nov. 8, 2013	UCLA	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 77-49 1-0
Nov. 11, 2013	Alabama	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 62-48 2-0
Nov. 15, 2013	Utah	Salt Lake City	W, 75-69 3-0
Nov. 21, 2013	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 78-55 4-0
Nov. 24, 2013	Southern	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 87-64 5-0
Nov. 27, 2013	UMASS-Lowell	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 77-42 6-0
Nov. 30, 2013	Washington State	Lincoln (PBA)	L, 76-72 6-1
Dec. 4, 2013	North Carolina	Chapel Hill, N.C.	L, 74-62 6-2
Dec. 8, 2013	Utah State	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 95-75 7-2
Dec. 14, 2013	Creighton	Lincoln (PBA)	W, 63-38 8-2
Dec. 21, 2013	South Dakota	Lincoln (PBA)	2:30 p.m.
Dec. 29, 2013	Oral Roberts	Lincoln (PBA)	2 p.m.
Jan. 2, 2013	Northwestern	Lincoln (PBA)	8 p.m.
Jan. 9, 2013	Michigan State	East Lansing, Mich.	6 p.m.
Jan. 12, 2013	Illinois	Champaign, Ill.	1 p.m.
Jan. 16, 2013	Minnesota	Lincoln (PBA)	8 p.m.
Jan. 19, 2013	Purdue	Lincoln (PBA)	4 p.m.
Jan. 26, 2013	Northwestern	Evanston, Ill.	4 p.m.
Jan. 29, 2013	Michigan	Lincoln (PBA)	7 p.m.
Feb. 1, 2013	Iowa	Iowa City, Ia.	2 p.m.
Feb. 5, 2013	Wisconsin	Madison, Wis.	7 p.m.
Feb. 8, 2013	Michigan State	Lincoln (PBA)	2 p.m.
Feb. 13, 2013	Michigan	Ann Arbor, Mich.	6 p.m.
Feb. 16, 2013	Indiana	Lincoln (PBA)	12 p.m.
Feb. 20, 2013	Ohio State	Columbus, Ohio	6 p.m.
Feb. 24, 2013	Penn State	Lincoln (PBA)	6 p.m.
Feb. 27, 2013	Illinois	Lincoln (PBA)	TBA
March 2, 2013	Purdue	West Lafayette, Ind.	2 p.m.
March 6-9, 2013	Big Ten Tourney	Indianapolis, Ind.	TBA
March 22-25	NCAA 1st & 2nd	TBA	TBA



Best of the Big Ten

Robinson earns second conference Player of Year award

Kelsey Robinson goes up for a big jump serve against Fairfield in the opening round of the NCAA Tournament.



MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

By Chris Peters
Huskers Illustrated

A LOT HAS CHANGED SINCE THE LAST TIME KELSEY ROBINSON WON HER CONFERENCE'S PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD. TWO YEARS AGO, SHE LED THE TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS TO AN SEC CHAMPIONSHIP AND AN APPEARANCE IN THE SECOND ROUND OF THE NCAA TOURNAMENT.

She led the conference in kills (4.52) and points (5.15) per set, finishing the season with an SEC-high 23 double-doubles and the second most aces per set (0.35). She finished just outside the top 10 in kills nationally.

The team revolved around her. All the action was fed her way. All the pressure was fed her way, too.

When she transferred to Nebraska for her senior season, she knew some of that would stay the same.

She still has the most swings on the team – 300-plus more than second-place Kadie Rolfzen – and the pressure is still on her, as a team captain,

but it's not as one-sided as it was before.

"(At Tennessee,) I kind of took on that pressure and that role – I have to do it all," Robinson said. "Now, I'm on a team where, on any night, anybody can go off."

That helps. She didn't have to bear the weight of an entire team while the team tried to make an NCAA Tournament run.

Her coach wanted to make sure it stayed that way. But she's still the team's top attacker. Players, like All-Big Ten outside hitter Kadie Rolfzen, look up to her. With that came some pressure, of course. Coach John Cook pulled aside Robinson and fellow-Tennessee transfer Mary Pollmiller, the team's setter, the week before the tournament started, hoping to ease the nerves of the team's veteran leaders.

He told them to keep calm. Take it point by point, game by game. The teams in the tournament will be similar to the Big Ten teams they faced all year long, he said. It's business as usual.

"(I told them) they should be confident and just keep doing what they're doing and worry about point-by-point," Cook said. "I think they get it."

They've been there before. Robinson and Pollmiller played in NCAA Tournament games while at Tennessee. They worked together to win a conference and they trudged through the mud together when the Lady Volunteers team was tearing itself apart.

The two bicker and fight on the court at practice almost every day at Nebraska, but it helps. They're working out the kinks, which always seem to be smoothed out by the time they take the floor at the Devaney Center.

Robinson and Pollmiller understand each other – that's what three seasons together will do. They know where each other will be on the court, what they're thinking and how they'll act, no matter if it's the match point or the first serve.

"She knows exactly what I like, she knows what I don't like," Robinson said. "She knows how to get me going."

"Having that really gives me an advantage going into a new conference. I don't have to get used to a new setter. I can just play the way I'm used to playing."

Pollmiller's sets helped Robinson finish with rocket launcher spikes, stealing the Big Ten spotlight. The Big Ten Conference's coaches elected her as the conference's best player.

"She's great at blocking, she's the best passer in the conference, she's a great server and she's a great defensive player," Cook said. "It's fun to see coaches recognize great all-around volleyball players."

This isn't Robinson's first go-around. Her 2011 award for SEC Player of the Year came during her sophomore year. But this one feels different.

"It means a lot to me," Robinson said. "It's cool to be honored by one of the best conferences in the country."

Cook said Robinson plays like a blend of Husker greats Jordan Larson, Jen Saleaumua and Gina Mancuso. He saw the potential in her before she arrived at Nebraska – he wanted her right out of high school. But he'll settle for the one year.

At the start of the season, getting Robinson a Player of the

2013 Nebraska Volleyball Schedule

Aug. 30, 2013	La.-Monroe	St. Louis	W, 3-0 1-0
Aug. 31, 2013	Auburn	St. Louis	L, 3-1 1-1
Aug. 31, 2013	St. Louis	St. Louis	W, 3-0, 2-1
Sept. 6, 2013	Villanova	Devaney Center	W, 3-1, 3-1
Sept. 7, 2013	Georgia	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 4-1
Sept. 12, 2013	St. Mary's	Devaney Center	W, 3-1, 5-1
Sept. 13, 2013	Dayton	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 6-1
Sept. 14, 2013	Iowa State	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 7-1
Sept. 22, 2013	Texas	Austin, Texas	L, 3-2, 7-2
Sept. 27, 2013	Northwestern	Evanston, Ill.	W, 3-1, 8-2
Sept. 28, 2013	Illinois	Champaign, Ill.	W, 3-0, 9-2
Oct. 4, 2013	Minnesota	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 10-2
Oct. 5, 2013	Wisconsin	Devaney Center	W, 3-2, 11-2
Oct. 11, 2013	Michigan	Ann Arbor, Mich.	W, 3-2, 12-2
Oct. 12, 2013	Michigan State	East Lansing, Mich.	L, 3-1, 12-3
Oct. 18, 2013	Indiana	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 13-3
Oct. 19, 2013	Purdue	Devaney Center	L, 3-1, 13-4
Oct. 23, 2013	Iowa	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 14-4
Oct. 25, 2013	Ohio State	Columbus, Ohio	W, 3-1, 15-4
Oct. 30, 2013	Illinois	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 16-4
Nov. 2, 2013	Northwestern	Devaney Center	W, 3-2, 17-4
Nov. 8, 2013	Wisconsin	Madison, Wis.	W, 3-1, 18-4
Nov. 10, 2013	Minnesota	Minneapolis, Minn.	W, 3-2, 19-4
Nov. 15, 2013	Michigan State	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 20-4
Nov. 16, 2013	Michigan	Devaney Center	W, 3-1, 21-4
Nov. 22, 2013	Purdue	West Lafayette, Ind.	L, 3-0, 21-5
Nov. 23, 2013	Indiana	Bloomington, Ind.	W, 3-0, 22-5
Nov. 27, 2013	Iowa	Iowa City, Ia.	W, 3-0, 23-5
Nov. 30, 2013	Penn State	Devaney Center	L, 3-1, 23-6.
Dec. 6, 2013	Fairfield	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 24-6
Dec. 7, 2013	Oregon	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 25-6
Dec. 13, 2013	San Diego	Devaney Center	W, 3-0, 26-6
Dec. 14, 2013	Texas	Devaney Center	L, 3-0, 26-7

Year honor was one of the team's goals, Cook said. Robinson's happy to get the award, she said, but when the award was announced, her mind was set on a different goal: winning the NCAA Tournament.

Although that didn't happen – the Huskers were swept by Texas in the Elite Eight – she still got more than she expected out of her one year in Lincoln. She led a freshman-heavy team deeper into the tournament than most people expected at the start of the season.

While she wasn't able to go out with a championship, her leadership and the things she taught the young players built a strong base for the team's future.

"I couldn't have asked for a better team to do it with," Robinson said. "These freshmen are going to be amazing when they're seniors. So everybody better watch out when they're seniors because they're going to win it all."

TAKING IT ALL IN

Kelsey Robinson looks around the sold out Bob Devaney Center prior to NU's Elite Eight match against No. 1 Texas. Robinson was one of three seniors on the volleyball team this year and helped the young Huskers go further than many would have predicted when the season started. Robinson finished with 21 kills and 12 digs in her final Husker match.

JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



HAPPY TRAILS

Kelsey Robinson receives a hug from longtime public address announcer Steve Johnsen, while his wife, Vicky Johnsen, looks on after the 25-19, 25-22, 25-23 loss against Texas. In her one season in Lincoln, Robinson finished with 530 kills and a .318 attack percentage, while earning Big Ten Player of the Year honors.

JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

NEBRASKA VOLLEYBALL NOTEBOOK

Compiled by Chris Peters • Photos by Mitch Otto

TEXAS TOPS HUSKERS IN REGIONAL FINAL

The Huskers couldn't get revenge on rival Texas in a rematch with Final Four implications.

Texas swept Nebraska (25-19, 25-22, 25-23) at the Devaney Center in the Lincoln regional final of the NCAA Tournament. The loss served as Nebraska's first home sweep loss since 1989 when the Huskers fell to No. 1 Hawaii. Nebraska kept the match close, out-killing and out-digging the Longhorns, but Nebraska struggled to block Texas shots. Meanwhile, the Longhorns were a force in the block, out-blocking Nebraska 14-3. The match came to an end on a service error with Big Ten Player of the Year Kelsey Robinson serving. Her cannon of a serve sailed just past the back line, giving Texas the win.

"That's a product of Kelsey trying to win a match," coach John Cook said.

ROBINSON'S END NU CAREER

Outside hitter Kelsey Robinson's one-year stint with Nebraska came to an end in tears, as the ultra-competitive senior reflected upon her lone season in Lincoln, which ended with a loss in a Texas rematch.

"For me, Nebraska was a second chance," Robinson said. "I've said it before—I've gotten a lot out of it. I don't think I was expecting the level of what I was going to get just as far as the relationships and the things I've learned. That's why this is so hard."

Robinson finished the year with 530 kills and a .318 attack percentage. Her 32 service aces, 3.33 digs per set and 0.66 blocks per set made her an elite 6-rotation player.

"She put together one of the greatest seasons from an outside hitter that the Big Ten has had with a team that is playing four freshmen and another newcomer setter," Cook said. "That's pretty remarkable. I hope people give her credit for what she's accomplished."

HUSKERS START STRONG AT HOME

Nebraska opened its home stand in the NCAA tournament strong, sweeping its first three opponents. One night after handling Fairfield 3-0 (25-15, 25-9, 25-17), the Huskers got revenge on Oregon, who knocked Nebraska out of the NCAA Tournament last season.

The Huskers swept the Ducks 25-22, 25-

19, 25-22 in front of a sellout Devaney Center crowd, allowing the team to advance to its home regional, where it swept San Diego (25-20, 25-23, 25-22) to advance to the Elite Eight.

Cook said having the regional at home helped set the team up for a deep run in the tournament.

The renovated Devaney Center makes for an elite facility, one that should host future regionals frequently, he said.

"Everything is first class here. I think that is what the NCAA Tournament is about. It is having a first class arena, these kids deserve it," Cook said. "For a team like Fairfield ... I totaled up their entire attendance through 32 matches, it was 5,137. They played in front of more people (at Nebraska) than they did in the entire 32 matches they played this year."

"The event and the atmosphere is something those kids will never forget."

BIG SETS NCAA TOURNEY RECORD

Of the eight teams that qualified for the NCAA Tournament from the powerful Big Ten Conference, seven advanced to the Sweet 16, setting a new NCAA record for most teams from one conference. Penn State, Nebraska, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Purdue, Michigan State and Michigan each qualified for the tournament. Only Michigan failed to advance, losing 3-2 in the first round to LSU.

Nebraska swept Fairfield and Oregon while 1-seed Penn State swept LIU Brooklyn and Utah. Purdue swept Central Arkansas before defeating undefeated 1-seed Missouri 3-1 on the Tigers' home floor.

Wisconsin advanced on a pair of sweeps over Milwaukee and California, while Minnesota had to outlast Colorado in five sets after a first round sweep of Radford. Michigan State advanced easily, winning 3-0 over Ohio and dropping only one set to No. 15 Kentucky.

The bracket set up two Big Ten matches in the third round, pitting Penn State with Michigan State, the only Big Ten team to topple the Nittany Lions all season, also setting up Illinois and Purdue.

The Boilermakers, Badgers, Nittany Lions and Huskers all advanced to the Elite Eight, with the Badgers and Nittany Lions moving on to the Final Four, setting up a potential Big Ten championship matchup.

COOK STRESSES DEPTH IN NCAA TOURNAMENT

Coach John Cook experimented with a few reserve players in the first round of the NCAA Tournament, hoping to build depth with the roster to set up a lengthy run in the tournament.

Kelsey Fien started in place of All-Big Ten outside hitter Kadie Rolfzen, leading the team in kills. Melanie Keil also had a strong performance, starting in place of All-North Region middle blocker Meghan Haggerty.

"Our goal is to have a long run in this thing," Cook said. "When we get into these long matches, we are going to need someone to come in and give us a spark."

In the Elite Eight match with Texas, Cook tapped into the depth, inserting middle blocker Melanie Keil in place of Cecilia Hall at first, then Meghan Haggerty for the third set of the match. Keil finished with 5 kills, the third most on the team.

"I felt like Cece was a little star struck and Meg was getting frustrated," Cook said. "I told Melanie to be ready to go and I think she was great coming off the bench."

"We used her for both middles, and I think she brought a great spark for us."

HUSKERS EARN YEARLY AWARDS

The All-Big Ten and All-Region were announced, featuring a slew of Huskers.

In the All-Big Ten class, Nebraska's outside hitters stole the spotlight. Kelsey Robinson earned Player of the Year, while Kadie Rolfzen earned All-Big Ten first team honors and unanimous All-Freshman team honors.

The conference also honored setter Mary Pollmiller on its Honorable Mention team and named outside hitter Morgan Broekhuis to its Sportsmanship Award Honorees list.

Five Huskers were named to the All-North Region team by the American Volleyball Coaches Association. Robinson, Pollmiller, Rolfzen and middle blocker Meghan Haggerty earned spots on the 14-player North Region first team. Middle blocker Cecilia Hall was listed as an honorable-mention selection.

Rolfzen was named the region's Freshman of the Year after averaging almost 3.5 kills and more than 2.5 digs per set.

Women's Volleyball

DUCKY REVENGE

Freshman Kadie Rolfzen had a huge match against Oregon in the second round of the NCAA Tourney with 15 kills and 17 digs. Rolfzen hit .333 on the match while recording her 12th double-double of the year as the Huskers avenged a season-ending loss to the Ducks in 2012 with a 25-22, 25-19, 25-22 win on Dec. 7 at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. The Huskers tallied 13 blocks to slow Oregon's fast offense.

MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



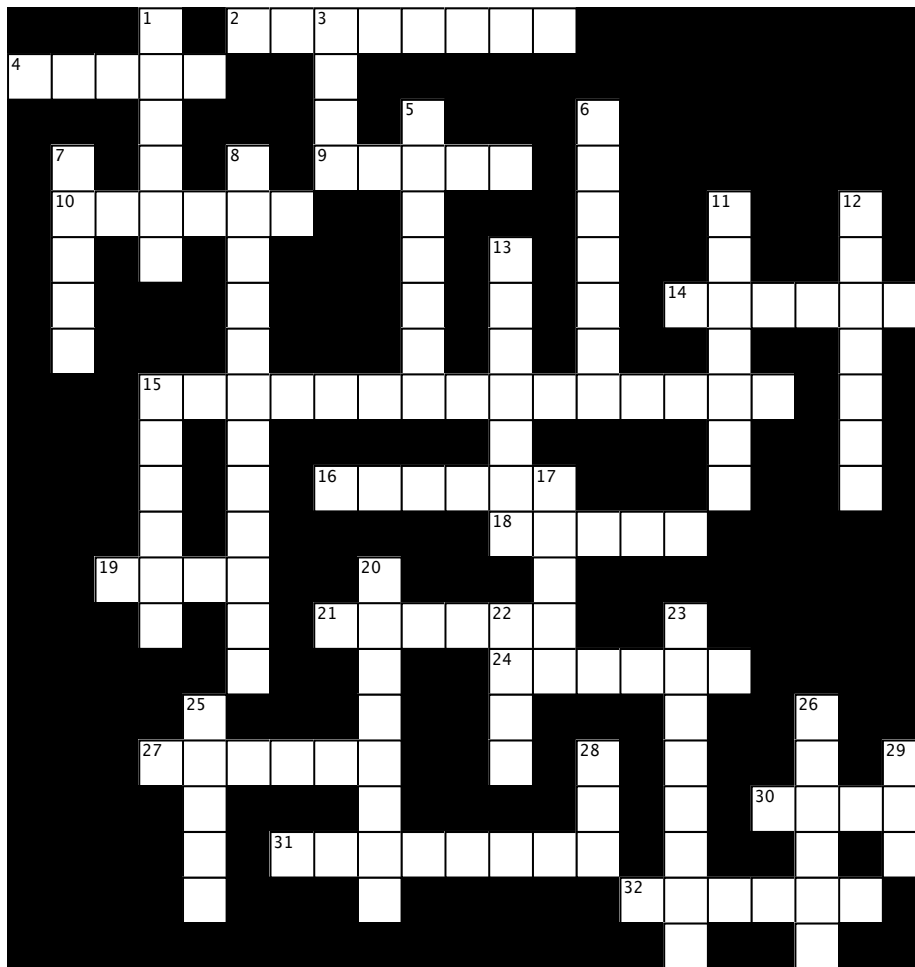
CLEAN SWEEP

Nebraska's Cecilia Hall goes up for an attack against San Diego in the opening match of the regionals at the Bob Devaney Sports Center on Dec. 13. The Huskers swept the No. 8 ranked Toreros 25-20, 25-23, 25-22 for their third-straight sweep in the NCAA Tournament. Hall finished with three kills, while fellow middle blocker Meghan Haggerty added 11 and Kelsey Robinson led with 14.

MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Crossword/Cartoon

JAN. 1 CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

2. Georgia's nickname
4. Wears No. 11 (defense)
9. Ex-Husker who will join Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame
10. Injured Georgia quarterback
14. Wears No. 11 (offense)
15. Opponent in 2014 opener
16. 1997 Outland Trophy winner
18. 2015 non-conference opponent
19. NU's leading receiver in 2013
21. Secondary coach
24. Georgia campus location
27. Georgia Heisman Trophy winner (1982)
30. Leading tackler vs. Iowa
31. Recorded fifth 1,500-yard rushing season in NU history
32. Wears No. 6 (defense)

DOWN

1. 2010 All-America kicker
3. First-team Academic All-American
5. NU's bowl opponent 1 year ago
6. Mauro Bondi's home state
7. NU's leading scorer in 2013
8. Gator Bowl location
11. Ex-Husker entering College Football Hall of Fame
12. NU's opponent in 2009 Gator Bowl
13. 1997 Lombardi Award winner
15. Wide receivers coach
17. Georgia head coach
20. Kenny Bell's home state
22. Ex-Husker wide receiver now with Washington Redskins
23. Wears No. 13 (defense)
25. Ex-Husker who is leading tackler for Tampa Bay Bucs
26. Hall of Fame Georgia coach
28. 2009 All-America defensive lineman
29. Georgia school color

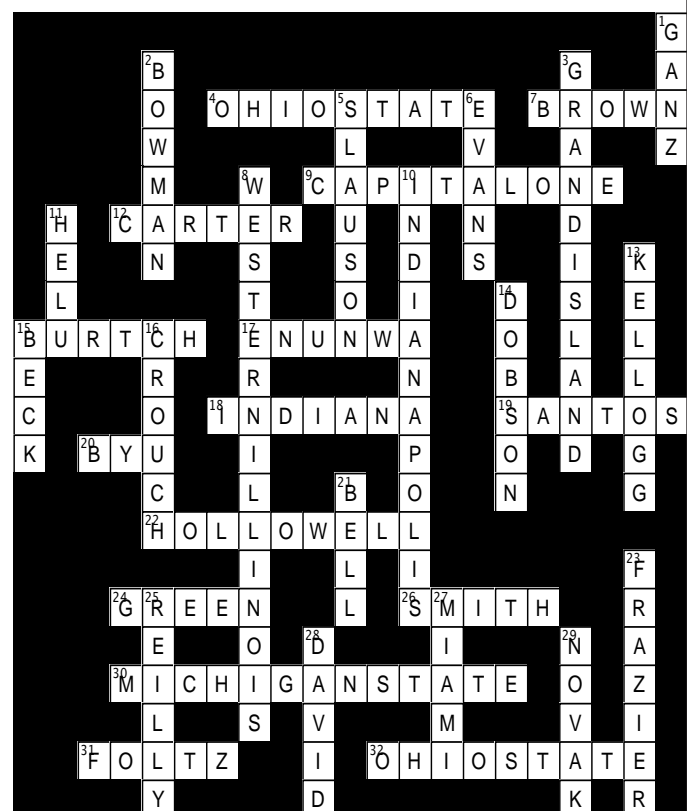
THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

NEBRASKA vs. GEORGIA



JANUARY 1, 2014
 WILL HUSKERS BREAK THEIR BOWL GAME LOSING STREAK?
 WILL HUSKERS AVENGE LOSS TO BULLDOGS IN LAST YEAR'S BOWL GAME?
 WILL COACH PELINI HAVE ANOTHER EMOTIONAL MELTDOWN?
 TUNE IN ON NEW YEAR'S DAY TO FIND OUT!!

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